



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06741704 2

354

2

Mason

31. nat

To John Langrish Esq.

THE
From the Author
TESTIMONY OF ST. PATRICK

AGAINST THE

APPEAL

FALSE PRETENSIONS OF ROME

TO

Primitive Antiquity

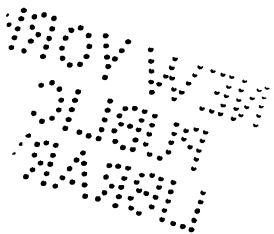
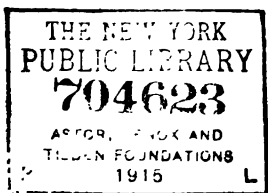
IN IRELAND.

BY

HENRY J. MONCK MASON, LL.D.

DUBLIN
WILLIAM CURRY, JUN. AND COMPANY.
LONGMAN AND CO. LONDON.

1846.



Printed by EDWARD BULL, 6, Bachelor's Walk.

INTRODUCTION.

THE work that is here presented to the public is written on a subject of vast importance in Ireland, and it is put forth on an occasion that is peculiar, and at a period which appears to be critical. The subject is religion—that most essential concern—considered in its most powerful influences upon the prejudices and affections of an Irishman's warm heart, and even upon those convictions, which give the earliest and strongest bias to his political sentiments.

The people of Ireland have been long and industriously misled, in respect to the origin and character of their primitive Christian faith ; its introduction has been falsely attributed to Rome ; its nature is falsely asserted to have been popish. It is of the greatest consequence that they should be set right on both points, and to do so is the object which I now endeavour to attain. " There are few things," says Dr. Phelan, in his admirable letter* addressed to the Marquis Wellesley—" there are few things in the circumstances of

* Published under the assumed name of DECLAN.

this country more worthy the attention of a great and enlightened statesman. The papacy maintains its ascendancy by an artful system of accommodation to the natural principles and motives of man. Of these it has chiefly taken to its aid in Ireland national spirit and pride of ancestry. The Irish are a fondly national people; they know little of their ancestors, but they believe of them every thing that enters into their conceptions of worth and greatness; and they feel a high, although a mournful consolation, in turning from their own condition to the supposed freedom, and glory, and happiness of other times. These principles have been incorporated into their creed: they receive their religion as the last bequest, and the last token, which remains to them of their almost canonized forefathers, and they cling to it with a desperate fidelity.

“To cherish and to keep alive this persuasion among them, legends, miracles, and prophecies are devised with lavish but adroit profusion. *Their religion is made to look venerable through the vista of antiquity*—interesting in the garb and attitude of decay. Thus the faith of a zealous Roman Catholic comes upon him with the romantic fervour of a picturesque and melancholy grandeur—through a long line of martyrs and confessors—through St. Patrick—through the apostles—it finally blends itself with the Saviour of the world. The ambition which such

considerations inspires is not to be estimated by political arithmeticians."

The occasion which gives rise to this publication is peculiar—the subject of our primitive creed has been noticed, more than once of late, in the most deliberative assembly of the British empire, and every allusion to it has been received in a manner not a little repulsive. When a nobleman of intelligence, education, and truth, rises in his place in the British senate, and calmly makes an allegation upon a matter of the very first importance, the result of his convictions on serious inquiry and candid consideration, one would naturally expect, that the character of uncompromising truth which is generally associated with the name of English noble—the place, the most exalted platform of imperial Britain—the checks against rash assertion which exist in a frank and enlightened audience, in a vigilant and critical press, and in the powerful sanctions of a jealous law of opinion—would ensure to every such allegation the most respectful attention, if not the most solemn weighing; especially if it materially affected the momentous concerns of a part of the nation, the right government of which has always baffled the utmost skill of legislators and of ministers. When, therefore, such an allegation* is met,

* The following is the newspaper account of part of the debate on Mr. Ward's motion, August 2, 1843:—Lord —

not with argument, but with rude exclamation, expressive of more than doubt, and conveying the indication of flat contradiction and of impatient surprise—intended not personally for the honourable member, but for the subject matter of his assertion—it exhibits such combined ignorance and recklessness with regard to it, as can only follow from the strongest influences of preconceived system—the existence of some prejudice as widely spread, as it is deeply rooted.

Whatever contempt, however, these assertions respecting our ancient religion may meet with in our parliament, they have called forth a champion to refute them through the press, who is armed with all the panoply of Rome. The allegation of Lord John Manners in the House of Commons, that the Irish Church “was for hundreds of years independent of Rome,” and others of a similar bearing, have given a theme to an intelligent Romanist, Dr. Rock ; who impugns them in a pamphlet, wherein, with much reserve of truths that tend to countenance a contrary opinion, he maintains that which has almost universally prepossessed the public mind—that “from the very beginning the Irish Church has been united to that of Rome,” and “paid obedience to

said “that the church at this day established in Ireland was the ancient church of that country.’ The response to this assertion was, oh, oh!

the papal supremacy." These assumptions I undertake to deny; not under the shackle of a reply to the letter of Dr. Rock, but taking it as a fit occasion for engaging in this important controversy, and following very much his arrangement as one that is simple and convenient.

The present period is critical for making an appeal to Protestant England upon this subject. The influence of Romanism has of late so increased in extent and in degree, as to become exceedingly alarming; already, in the case of several persons, there seems to be realized the awful judgment of God—that of sending a strong delusion to believe a lie. May the sincere and simple faith of many in these favoured islands avert this consummation from becoming general; and save us from the evils that are threatening to occur, through the infatuation of our rulers, the indifference of our constitutional guardians, the subtlety of Jesuits, or the clamour of demagogues.

From the time* when Mr. Pitt, a minister most

* It is most justly remarked in the Quarterly Review for June, 1845, p. 259, with reference to Mr. Pitt's bill of 1791—

"Hoc fonte derivata, clades

In patriam populumque fluxit.

"It was brought in by him," says the reviewer, "after a long negotiation with a committee of English Roman Catholics; and having *satisfied himself* by the opinions of the universities of Paris, Douay, Louvain, Salamanca, and Alcala

wise in his generation, in opposition to all the teachings of history and of experience, in despite of unalterable principles for centuries directing her uniform conduct, attended to Rome's testimony respecting herself, and admitted the false dogma that popery had changed its character with the times, a flood of falsehood has been let out upon unsuspecting and credulous England, and erroneous facts abundantly asserted or insinuated, and believed.

Thus it claims to be admitted, as a postulate, that 7,000,000 is the number of Romanists in Ireland; while for the whole kingdom no greater number of Protestants is allowed, than the province of Ulster alone notoriously contains. Thus also as a next step, and one that might well be expected to follow, the entire of this 7,000,000 is most confidently assumed as being opposed to the creed of Protestants, their Bible, and their schools; and this in the face of abundant and public testimony to the contrary, such as the following, contained in a series of resolutions publicly presented by 3,221 Roman Catholic teachers and masters of the Irish Society, in a district surrounding Kings-court:—"We can assure His Majesty's government, that the Irish peasantry are most anxious for scriptural education for themselves and their children.

as to the tenets of that church respecting the pope's authority within these realms, his dispensing power, and the keeping faith with heretics."

There are thousands of Roman Catholics whose cry can never reach the ear of the British senate,—who *dare not breathe a word against the tyranny that oppresses them*,—who from sincere love for scriptural education, in defiance of every species of hostility, continue to send their children to Bible schools.” Against such evidence also as is recorded in the report of a late trial* at Dingle, in which it was proved, that numbers of Roman Catholics—800 in that district alone—had become converts to the Protestant faith, through the instrumentality of similar teaching.

Thus also credit is blindly given to other extravagant assertions: for instance, the monster meetings are magnified ten-fold, for the purposes of political mischief; and a great landed proprietor of the south, a Peer, and once Secretary for Ireland, is hurried by his blind terrors to proclaim in the House of Lords, the alarming danger that existed in the country, from the assembling of 400,000 persons on one of these occasions in the city of Cork—a number amounting to nearly one-half the inhabitants of that most extended county, including men, women, and children!

And to bring the subject of these delusions to bear more upon that of this publication, it cannot under the circumstances afford matter for surprise, that the entire of the truth respecting the primitive

* See the Report of the action of the Rev. C. Gayer, against the Editor of the Kerry Examiner, Tralee Summer Assizes, 1845.

Christian faith in this country, its introduction and its character, so little previously understood, and now so generally misrepresented, should, when brought without preparation before an assembly so much predisposed to reject it as is our House of Commons, be received with exclamations expressive of incredulity ;—that the falsehood which intruded on it should be admitted, especially as it has always been assumed by the Romanists, as a ground upon which they founded and erected the entire fabric of their church in this land. Still further, we cannot be astonished, that interested agitators follow this up with that most false and mischievous corollary, which identifies the Saxon with the Protestant ; although it is an historical fact which has never been denied, that the Saxons (as the British followers of Henry II. have been popularly misnamed) did work together with Pope Adrian, for confirming and perpetuating the Romish creed and authority in this land, and for granting to him the papal tribute of Peter's pence.

The present is the age for facts ; but it is too much the fashion to draw principles from them, instead of applying principles to them ; and when the facts thus relied on contradict their very name, they must mislead or impel into error. Hence the present evil influence of that false principle, with all its erroneous results—that the numbers and uninstructed desires of the multitude are to sway, even in matters

connected with religion—though its clamors are but the echo of the demagogue ; although the Lord himself has declared, that “ broad is the way and wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that enter in thereat ;” and although the sin of David in numbering his people (2 Samuel xxiv.), and relying upon his multitudes, as the right mode of promoting the great cause of Israel, was visited with a peculiar national judgment.

If the religion of the empire be put to the vote, and the people be left to determine for themselves in those concerns, wherein man, without the teaching of God’s word, is naturally most blind to that which is his properest choice, the result must be ignorance and error ; for who does not know that—so great is the tendency to error in our fallen race—false opinions have always adhered with most tenacity to the minds of men, and that ages of progressing civilization often pass over, before they can be entirely eradicated. It is admitted that the Gospel must be aggressive, or remain unknown. Truth must make a struggle to prevail—not with carnal weapons, it is true ; but with all possible energy, perseverance, and zeal in the use of those which it is proper to employ. These principles are illustrated by real facts, recorded in all the annals of mankind, in every climate, in every age.—To yield to the untutored will of majorities in matters of religion may sound very liberal,

and be very expedient ; but it is essentially as unwise, as to give up to childhood the regulation and enforcement of its own discipline, or to trust with a mob the ordering and preserving of wholesome government.

From erroneous facts thus engendering erroneous principles, erroneous measures must proceed. There was, for some time, a strong undercurrent of instruction and improvement progressing in Ireland, which was operating well ; and it would have been wise to have let well alone. Had it been overlooked, it might in a short time have redeemed, as a sinking fund, the great national debt long due from England to this island. But it has been interfered with, and its progress materially checked. The habitual enemies of intellectual lights took the alarm ; the numerical principle was strongly urged, and instantly enforced in practice :—education has, in consequence, been dislodged from the rock upon which it had placed its strong foundation, to be again raised upon the sandy basis of political expediency. Thus has the divine ordinance, “ Train up a child in the way he should go,” been sacrificed, by the human legislator, on the altar of the law of opinion.*

Yet such measures are far from having attained the hoped-for end ; nor will they ever accomplish it.

* “ It was public opinion that emancipated the Roman Catholics,” (*Quart. Rev.* June, 1845, p. 296)—but it should not have been listened to, when it clamored for the slavery of their minds.

There was never such a frown on the countenances of many of the Roman Catholic peasants as there is now—there never before existed any general symptom of a democratic bearing among the common people. More than ever is the absentee landlord scared away from dwelling among his tenants ; more than ever is the overflowing capital of England turned off from spreading over and fertilizing our land ; more than ever is agitation emboldened, and alarm increased, and bad men encouraged, and the good man made sick at heart—for the arms of Britain seem to be outspread to receive into Ireland, and to foster, that deep, insidious, encroaching order which France has thought it politic to expel ; which most nations have, within the last century, denounced ; and which our own statute-book has, even in the relief bill of 1832, pointed at with wholesome caution.

Is it not like the operation of that curse, of the strong delusion to believe a lie, that the Jesuits, who, by their monopoly of the pulpit, the confessional chair, and the education of youth, had acquired their dangerous influence and destructive power, should possess, at present, such credit in Protestant imperial Britain? There is truly an alarming degree of infatuation abroad concerning them. Not many years ago, a member of the House of Commons, -- author, a traveller, and a statesman, declarer?

ingly in the House of Commons, that he would be obliged to any one that would show him a Jesuit ; when they were notoriously established in extensive seminaries even in England. Again, a noble author, in a liberal pamphlet, recommends the reforming of Maynooth by entirely committing it into their hands—at this time, when it is notorious throughout all this country, that they are nursing at Clongowes, as a seed-plot for that college, those plants of bigotry and persecution which are soon to appear, as the tares among the wheat, in every parish where the seed of the Word of God has been sown, and promises to thrive. And now, at length, the most precious of all moral trusts—education—is virtually committed to them, unless the evil be prevented by their jealous exclusion from the Roman Catholic priesthood and seminary. Lastly, we are gravely assured, by one of the most influential writers in the land, (*Quart. Rev.* July, 1845, p. 295, &c.,) that all this, and more, to wit, the payment of this clergy, “would be a defence to the Established Church,” and be a benefit to “all the Protestant interests of Ireland.”—p. 297. This is all well, if we shut our eyes upon Jesuitical influence ; but otherwise, and if it be blindly admitted—

“*Dividimus muros, et mœnia pandimus urbis*
Accingunt omnes operi—
Illa subit, mediæque minans illabitur urbi—

Instamus tamen immemores, cæcique furore,
Et monstrum infelix sacratâ sistimus arâ—
Tunc etiam fatis aperit Cassandra futuros
Ora, *Dei jussu non unquam credita Teucris.*—

But to return to the principal falsehood by which our countrymen have been for a long time deluded—the subject of our inquiry—the Roman origin and character of Patrick and his creed. This is “the fable,” to indulge in which, they, “after their own lusts, heap to themselves teachers,” and “turn away their ears from the truth, 1 Tim. iv. 2;” but, were this fundamental and influential error in any measure removed—were the people at all enlightened as to the anti-papal character of their ancient church—so far as such a conviction should extend, an object of great importance would assuredly be attained. Popular clamour, with its majorities and enthusiasm, need no longer be dreaded; for these would then both lead and propel the teacher and minister along the good old paths. Old prejudices would not rise up in arms *against* but *for* the truth, and education would be replaced upon its legitimate basis. Add to this, that legislative assemblies would be better taught how to estimate and reply to such reasoning as the following :—“ If it be unjust to interfere with a prescription of three hundred years, it was still more unjust to interfere with the still longer prescription, which was disregarded in

this country when the Reformation took place.”* If this speaker set up the claim of Romanist priority, we can rebut it by a still more ancient prescription—we can argue that it was the most unjust proceeding of all to interfere with our *real prescription*, by the introduction of popery upon the primitive and Protestant faith of our ancient Christians. And possibly—if it were not a consummation too Utopian, although devoutly, to be wished—the legislature might be enabled to accommodate expediency to principle; and to make their human laws to run parallel at once with the law of God, and with the sanctions of public opinion.

To expect this change in a case of inveterate prejudice to be speedy or universal, would be absurd; but, as far as it would extend, it would doubtless tend much to neutralize the evils that are increasing, and even to convert them into engines of good. The warm affections and stubborn predilections of the Irish peasantry, have lately been engaged in promoting, instead of counteracting, profitable instruction, by the employing, as a medium for conveying it, of their native and beloved tongue; were there added to this the persuasion, that the pure doctrine offered to them now by Protestants, was really the unmixed

* See Lord John Russell's speech on Mr. Ward's motion in the House of Commons, relative to the Temporalities of the Church of Ireland, in June, 1844.

and unshackled faith of Patrick and of their primitive saints, hope could scarcely exaggerate the amount of religious and moral benefit that would flow in, through* these two channels united, upon the country; especially if the more ingenuous among the Romish clergy should be led to perceive, and to admit, as some have done, their error upon this subject.

To conclude these remarks with a few words of necessary explanation.

The advocates of the pure and Protestant nature of early Christianity in Ireland, have almost all of them committed a great mistake; we have indeed hitherto in general erred, by allowing it to be assumed, that St. Patrick was an emissary of Rome. Misled by the great authority of Ussher, or indifferent as to the *origin* of the Christian truth which our primitive saints professed, because that that faith could be readily proved to have been totally different from that of the Council of Trent, we have been thus

* The experiment has been tried. The Irish Society for educating the natives of Ireland through the medium of their own language, of which the author is secretary, has had the effect of interesting them in the inquiry; this has been extensively followed up, and with what results may be learned from an interesting extract in the Appendix, which will doubtless prove, that the expectations above alluded to are not founded on illusory conjecture, but on rational hope.—(See App. No. I.)

imprudent. The concession, made for argument's sake only, was soon built on by the Romanists, and stated by them as a fact acknowledged by us without any reserve; and now, in the very latest of their publications it is, with unblushing confidence, declared, that "St. Patrick's mission by Rome is so strongly borne out by all antiquity, that learned Irishmen, though Protestants, for very shame's sake, durst not shut their eyes to it, nor deny it." Passing by this uncourteous implication of false motive, as naturally proceeding from want of candour in discussion, I shall roll off this reproach, and dare to contradict this broad and bold allegation in the fullest manner.

In following this argument, I have chiefly sought to come to the truth, by an examination of the internal evidence afforded by ancient documents, which are decidedly genuine; and have avoided those modern legends, which are so replete with revolting assertions, popular fancies, and absurd traditions, that I have often been surprised at their being quoted and seriously relied on. It is, indeed, from this ready credulity that compilers, more modern again, have run into such contradictions as to make it wise to be very cautious in abiding by their authority; especially as it is manifest, that many of them have not looked into the original documents, which are referred to by the laborious and responsible writers whose materials they retail. I shall here present a

few instances out of many of decided contradictions, on mooted points of the greatest consequence. The history of the introduction of monachism into Ireland, as distinctly related by Gennadius, is relied on by Dr. O'Connor, but rejected by Dr. Lanigan. Dr. Ledwich, and his follower, Dean Murray, fully patronize the stories of the Culdees; Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, labours to prove them fabrications, and Mr. Moore does not hesitate to pronounce them to be a "fiction." Even that important passage of Prosper and Bede, that records the mission of Palladius, the papal emissary, gives rise, as we shall see, to adverse theories: O'Connor and Moore assert that he was sent over to extirpate Pelagianism in this island; while Lanigan denies its existence here, or that such was the object of his mission. O'Connor thinks that this Palladius was deputed to Ireland as "Primus Episcopus," in point of time; Doctor Lanigan is of a quite contrary opinion. The meaning given to this term "primus" by many is, that he was ordained and commissioned as Primate of an already existing church; this is the theory of Dr. Rock, who relies on the story of the four bishops whom Patrick found established at Emly, Saiger, Beg-Erin, and Ardmore; with him many others agree. Again, Dr. Lanigan calls these stories "fables," and says, that "the old Irish annals and the most correct lives of St. Patrick are in direct opposition to them."

Mr. Moore considers these four bishops to have been disciples of St. Patrick ; yet he too must have his infant church for Palladius, "its first bishop;" and pronounces it, as we have seen, to be Pelagian. It is well known that Dr. Ledwich, with ultra-scepticism, denies the very existence of our patron saint ; and that in this opinion he stands almost alone. Finally, to pass by many less material differences of systems, how various are the several judgments respecting the papal origin and character of the ancient Irish creed, and the other subjects which I now propose to enlarge on—how discrepant are the opinions of Drs. Lanigan and O'Connor, Mr. Moore, and others, from those of Sir W. Betham, Mr. Petrie, Dr. Phelan,* and most of our present antiquarians !

Dr. O'Connor, in one of his letters of Columbanus, remarks that, "to quote authorities in support of a disputed fact, which are not by both parties admitted as authentic, is only to demonstrate a lack of logic and a lack of sense;" and, applying this just maxim to this case of many contradictions, I have judged it right to be fastidious in the admission of evidence affecting it. I shall explain shortly the rules by which I have been guided.

The highest authorities, and those upon which I chiefly rely, are historians, such as the venerable

* See his argument copied from "Declan," in p. 41 ; and in Dean Murray's "Ireland and her Church," pp. 20-24.

Bede, and St. Bernard, the biographer of Malachi, both of them zealous Romanists, and fully accredited by Protestants; the records of general councils; original letters, as those of Columbanus and others, that are admitted to be genuine; very ancient MSS., as the Book of Armagh, and especially that remarkable relic of "the confession of St. Patrick," or his letter to the Irish. To these I should add the testimony of tradition, wherever it is general, uniform, and reasonable; and particularly when it is coupled with that of ancient monuments and nomenclature. I should observe that I have always, as far as is practicable, myself consulted the original works from which information has been derived.

Other testimony should be listened to with more caution, either because that it consists of *hearsay* evidence, which is only of secondary value in itself; or else because that it wants that ingredient of full admission by both parties, which the maxim of Doctor O'Connor requires. Of this kind, I consider that of Adamnanus and of Ionas, the biographers of Columba and of Columbanus; the annalists, the *Acta Sanctorum*, and the celebrated catalogue of Irish saints. This could not have been written previously to the year 63 —probably much later; and, although it bears every mark of great antiquity, should be quoted with caution, as it is not entirely reconcileable with some documents of the same or an earlier date. To this I must add other writings—"opusculæ"

tributed to St. Patrick, but which possess doubtful evidence of their being genuine. All these I have referred to sparingly, even when their admission by Romanist writers entitles me to make use of them without reserve.

Another class of evidence is that of still more modern biographies, histories, annals, and traditions. To these no general rule of selection can apply ; but they are all of them only hearsay, and secondary evidence of primitive facts ; and many of them are not “by both parties admitted as authentic.” It is to be also remembered against them, that it is through them that so much of misrepresentation and error has been let in upon this question.

Compilers of the present day must stand or fall with their original authorities ; even their admissions can only be properly used as opinions, especially as they not seldom contradict each other.

It is necessary, for the information of most readers, to state, that the terms *Scoti* and *Scotia*, as employed by Bede and other very ancient writers, apply to the Irish and to Ireland alone. Bede explains it so himself ; so that I shall only add the testimony of Bishop Lloyd, who, referring to Ussher’s *Primordia* (p. 734) for authority, thus asserts—“I do not believe that there is any writer that lived a thousand years after Christ, that *once* mentions the name of Scotland, and doth not mean Ireland by it.”

I think it proper to add, that in some passages

where I may appear to appropriate the opinions of later writers on this subject, I do but repeat my own, as they were put forth by me many years ago ; and also to apologise for presenting here much that has been already published both by myself and others. But it could not be avoided ; without it the argument would be injuriously weakened, and its object frustrated. That object is to present an entire body of appropriate and unquestionable* evidence, whether it be novel or otherwise, freed only from the uncertainty of legend and suspicious tradition.

* There is much of interesting legend, which cannot assume the high title of unquestionable evidence in the course of strict argument, but which yet may lay some claim to popular belief. Mr. King has well blended some of this with sterner reasoning in his Primer.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE OBJECT OF THIS WORK	1
CHRISTIANITY IN IRELAND BEFORE A.D. 432	2
Asserted by St. Patrick	ib.
Admitted by all historians	ib.
Proved by the Pope's commission to Palladius	3
By Letters of Celestius	ib.
Testimony of St. Chrysostom and Tertullian	ib.
Domestic authorities referred to	4
PATRICK HAD NO CONNEXION WITH ROME	5
Difficulties at all times respecting St. Patrick	7
The name "Patricius" the great cause of error	11
Some proofs of his existence	14
Not commissioned by Rome, demonstrable accord-	
ing to the rules of evidence at law	16
Proved by the silence of his own writings	17
Proved by their internal evidence	18
Mistake in this respect of Dr. Lanigan	

	PAGE
Error and misrepresentation of the epistle to	
Coroticus, by Dr. Rock	24
Two churches in Ireland in Patrick's time	25
He claims the Gallican as his own	ib.
Purity of St. Patrick's hymn	28
Proved by the silence of Bede	29
The Irish not followers of St. Patrick's rule of	
Easter	31
Proved by the silence of Cummiánus junior	33
Of Columbanus, Prosper, &c.	34
Conclusion from these reasonings	36
Evidence to the contrary, mere hearsay, uncertain,	
and contradictory	38
The most accredited popular account of Patrick	39
An occasion of contradictions among moderns	40
Dr. Phelan's summary conclusion	41
Corruption of authorities adduced to establish this	
Roman connexion	43
St. Patrick's use of the Latin tongue relied on	44
And accounted for	ib.
Evangelical use of the Irish tongue	47
 IRELAND DID NOT RECEIVE THE GOSPEL THROUGH ANY OTHER EMISSARY FROM ROME	 48
Conversion of King Lucius of Britain	ib.
Doubtful and inapplicable to the Irish Church	49
Palladius said to have been sent over as a bishop	
to the believing Irish Church	51
False reading of " <i>credentes, sed non recté</i> "	52

Erroneously applied to Pelagianism in Ireland	
by O'Connor and Moore	52
Palladius sent, either as the first bishop to Ireland	54
Or as primate over an existing Church	56
Story of the four pre-existing bishops, a fabrication	ib.
Rejected by Dr. Lanigan, Moore, &c., and refuted	57
St. Columbanus assumed to have asserted the Roman origin of the Irish Church	61
His words otherwise accounted for	62
The Irish Church peculiar in its head, litany, &c.	63
THE IRISH CHURCH IS OF EASTERN ORIGIN	64
Evidence of Bede	ib.
Detail of the synod of Whitby	ib.
It testifies to this Eastern origin	70
History of the Paschal controversy	71
Irish Church not represented at council of Nice, A.D. 325	75
Did not follow St. Patrick in its cycle	76
Corrects its rules of Paschal observance, &c.	77
Proved by St. Austin's offers of compromise	78
Also by the Liturgy of the Scots	79
By the ancient character of Irish episcopacy	81
By the system of Monachism	83
Monks of Iona, &c.	84
Their rule Egyptian, their choice of islands, &c.	86
Proved by Greek characters in the Book of Armagh	ib.

	PAGE
Proved by peculiar version of the New Testament in it	89
And of the Old Testament in ancient quo- tations	90
Practical view of the primitive Irish Church .	91
Further testimonies of the existence of St. Pa- trick	95
 ST. PATRICK WAS A MEMBER OF THE GALLI- CAN AND OF THE EASTERN CHURCH .	
His education and connexions Gallican . .	ib.
Introduction by him of Oriental Liturgy, &c. into Ireland	100
His churches Oriental	101
Oriental Episcopacy established by him . .	ib.
The silence respecting him in the synod of Whitby accounted for	102
Proved by the Eastern character of his Book of Armagh	103
Patrick the spiritual father of St. Columba's Ori- ental Church	104
Evidence of the Book of Kells	106
Cause of the failure of Palladius	107
 INDEPENDENCE OF THE IRISH CHURCH, AND ITS REJECTION OF THE SUPRE- MACY OF ROME	
Three eras in this view of the Irish Church .	110
Perfectly independent until after A.D. 600 .	111
Proved by a canon of the Council of Constanti- nople, A.D. 381	113

Proved by the ancient titles, &c. of St. Patrick .	114
The reception of Palladius by the Irish .	115
The conduct of the Irish Bishops on the ques- tion of the Three Chapters, A.D. 553 .	116
The position of St. Columba in the Irish Church	117
The arguments, &c. at the synod of Whitby	ib.
Arguments against it from ancient canons refuted	118
The Church of the Britons independent temp. Greg. I.	ib.
Rejects St. Austin's mission and innovations	124
Agreement with it of the Irish Church .	126
Supremacy not any where assumed by Rome, until after A.D. 600	127
Convictions of Ecclesiastical writers respecting Irish independence	128
Independence manifested in Columbanus's letters to Gregory I.	130
And to Boniface IV.	131
Proved by the epistle of Pope Honorius to the Irish clergy	135
Also by the letter of Cummiānus, jun, to Segienus	136
Encroachments of Rome after A.D. 600	137
Degeneracy of the Irish Church in the seventh century	138
Evidenced by the ancient catalogue of saints	ib.
Mediaeval instances of encroachment, &c. .	141
Independence proved by the abuse of the Irish Church by some Romanists	143
Proved also by the occasional deference to it of others	145

	Page
Proved by the visit of Malachy to Rome, and the following synods	146
Origin and details of his journey	ib.
Great Discrepancy at the time between the Irish and papal Churches	147
Council at Holmpatrick, A.D. 1148, and second journey of Malachy	151
Synod of Kells, A.D. 1152	152
Synod of Cashel, A.D. 1172	153
Its vast importance, consisting in the establishing of dependence on Rome	154
Subsequent marks of lingering independence	ib.
Even to the present day	156
THE DOCTRINES OF THE ANCIENT IRISH AT VARIANCE WITH THOSE OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT	ib.
Confined to a few instances at the present	
Encyclical letter of Gregory XVI. respecting the Holy Scriptures	157
Opposed to the opinions of Patrick, Columba, Columbanus, Finian, &c.	158
And to the practice of the ancient Irish	159
Also to those of Pope Gregory I.	ib.
Justification by faith alone denounced by the Council of Trent	160
Maintained by St. Patrick and St. Paul	161
And the celebrated Irish divine, Sedulius	163
Celibacy of the clergy not holden by the father and grandfather of St. Patrick	164
The great grandfather of Gregory I. a Pope	ib.
Celibacy not practised by the primates of Ireland	ib.

CONCLUSION. —The false pretensions of Rome compared to the deception of the Gibeonites	. 165
APPENDIX I. —Address of 178 Irish teachers of schools, declaring “Romanism a novelty”	. 167
APPENDIX II. —Errors respecting the Culdees	. 168
Various notions of them	. 169
What they probably were	. 170
APPENDIX III. —Opuscula or works of St. Patrick	. ib.
High authority of his “Confession,” from external evidence	. 171
From internal evidence	. 172
St. Patrick’s Hymn	. 173
Inferior authenticity of the Epistle to Coroticus, and the canons	. ib.
APPENDIX IV. —Account of ancient Irish copies of the New Testament, &c. in Latin	. 176
Their version peculiar to Ireland	. 179

ORIGIN OF THE IRISH CHURCH.

THE objects of the following pages are to demonstrate that the origin of the Irish Church was eastern, and not from Rome ; that it was entirely independent of the latter see, until upwards of two centuries after the alleged arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland, A.D. 432 ; and that it still maintained that independence, and rejected the Papal supremacy to a great degree, until the former was finally surrendered, and the latter generally acquiesced in, on the arrival of the English, in the reign of Henry II.

In treating of the first of these subjects, it will be necessary, as a foundation, to establish the fact of the introduction of Christianity into Ireland, long before the alleged commission of St. Patrick from Rome, A.D. 432 ; it will then be essential, in the second place, to show, that he never had any connection with that city or the papal see ; and, thirdly, that neither did this island receive the gospel through any other of its emissaries. This will naturall

lead to the proof of the eastern origin of our native church, and an endeavour to connect St. Patrick with that channel of communication.

The first of these facts is conceded by every ecclesiastical historian. Indeed, St. Patrick, in his confession, or Letter to the Irish—a work that is universally admitted to be genuine—has declared it in the following words :—“ Ubique pergebam causâ vestrâ, etiam usque ad exterâs partes, ubi nunquam aliquis pervenerat qui baptizaret, aut clericos ordinaret, aut populos consummaret”—“ I went every where, on your account, even to the remotest places, where never before had any one come who could baptise, or ordain clergy, or complete” (perhaps confirm) “ the people.” “ An assertion,” says Mr. Moore, (History, vol. 1, p. 221,) “ plainly implying that, in the more accessible parts of the country, Christianity had *before this time* been *preached and practised*.” In making this admission, the historian almost repeats the words of Dr. Lanigan, and acquiesces in the concurring opinions of the Abbé M’Geoghegan, Doctor O’Conor, Signor Villanueva, the Rev. Mr. Carew, Colgan, Doctor Rock, &c.—as well as that of Archbishop Ussher, and the other Protestant writers on the subject. So that “ it is universally admitted, that there were Christian congregations in Ireland, before the mission of Palladius, which took place in A.D. 431.”*

This truth is further established by the terms of the

* Dr. Lanigan’s Eccl. His. vol. I, c. 1, sec. 4.

commission given by Pope Celestine to Palladius. He preceded Patrick by a few years, and was himself sent "ad Scotos in Christum credentes"—to believers in Christ, and not to Pagans. I shall find it necessary to comment on this testimony more fully hereafter, and now produce it merely to prove the allegation which I at present maintain.

When a point is conceded, it is often prudent to abstain from urging it by further reasonings ; but, on a subject so important, so remote, so generally enveloped in obscurity—when, also, the admission seems to be generally forgotten by historians when they come to speak of St. Patrick—it may be useful to add the following most striking arguments that bear upon the fact. Celestius, the celebrated follower of the arch-heretic Pelagius, was an Irishman ; (St. Jerome from Uss. Prim. 209,) and, before he adopted the Pelagian doctrines, and in the year 369, he addressed three letters from the monastery of Tours, to his parents in Ireland, "in the form of little books, and full of such piety as to make them necessary to all who love God."* This implies the reception of Christianity in Ireland previously to the date of these epistles, or sixty-two years before the alleged arrival of St. Patrick.

That it was flourishing in this island between these periods, appears from the testimony of St. Chrysostom, who, writing about the year 400, asserts thus :—

* Moore's Hist. of Ireland, vol. I, p. 206—these are the expressions of Geunadius.

“Although thou shouldst go to the Ocean and those British Isles, thou shouldst hear all men every where discoursing matters out of the Scriptures.”* We may ascend yet nearer to the period of our Lord’s advent, resting still upon the authority of one of the fathers ; for Tertullian, who flourished about the year 200, in his book, *Adversus Judæos*, c. 7, asserts, that the parts of the British Isles which were unapproached by the Romans were yet subjected to Christ—“*Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca Christo veró subdita.*”

Domestic authorities of great antiquity might be added to these. Historians, in speaking of King Cormac, who reigned in Munster about A.D. 254, say that, “by some writers it is alleged, that he was converted to Christianity some years before his death, being, it is added, the third person in Ireland who professed that faith before the coming of St. Patrick,” (Moore’s *Hist.* vol. 1, p. 132 ; M’Geoghegan, vol. 1, p. 227, &c.) There are many other such testimonies containing allegations or implications of the fact.†

Notwithstanding these concessions, however, we find many of the writers that have been forced to

* *Opera*, Ed. Sav. Tom. viii. p. 3 ; see also Tom. vi. p. 635, and iii. 696.

† We have accounts given of Christian saints born of Christian parents in Ireland, even in the second century ; as of Saint Cataldus, bishop of Tarentum, (*Primordia*, 751, &c.) and others.—See a curious extract, of uncertain date, from the *Brehon Laws*, in *Betham’s Antiquarian Researches*, vol. I. p. 280.

make them, still pointing to St. Patrick, as to him who "introduced among them," the Irish, "the Christian doctrine."—(Moore, vol. I. p. 307.) Mr. Moore even adopts the popular saying, "that not to Palladius but to Patrick did God grant the conversion of the Irish," (p. 210;) and Doctor Rock, the latest writer on the subject, speaking of him as an emissary from Rome, says, "that to a bishop of Rome was Pagan Ireland indebted, first, for her conversion to the Gospel, and afterwards for her hierarchy."

Without attempting to reconcile these assertions with previous admissions, I shall confine myself, at present, to that part of them that alludes to our primitive hierarchy—to the assertion that Palladius, and after him Patrick were appointed bishops to the Irish, by the Roman Pontiffs, "for the superintendence of their infant church." "Whatever preachers of the faith, foreign or native, may have appeared previously in Ireland, it seems certain," says Mr. Moore, "that, before this period, no hierarchy had been then instituted; but that in Palladius, the Irish Christians saw their first bishop."—(History, vol. I. p. 209.)

I shall encounter this erroneous assumption in all its parts; and commence at once by striking at its root, and endeavouring to demonstrate, that our celebrated apostle had never any connection, by commission or otherwise, with the papal see.

The trait of Irish character which manifests itself in a pertinacious abiding by ancient customs, and a

fond loitering among the ruins of departed greatness, arises from a development of the sentiment of veneration, which is possessed in a high degree by the Celtic natives of Ireland; when combined with ideality, another prominent feature in their character, it forms that "sort of retrospective imagination which for ever yearns after the past,"* as Mr. Moore has happily expressed it, which is so common among them. These give to the phalanx of national prejudices so much depth, that whatsoever is intrenched behind it can scarce ever be dislodged, or brought to capitulate. What chance, therefore, of penetrating it, has an inquiry into the reality of the History of St. Patrick, the genuineness of his imputed writings, the truth of his commission from Rome, or the discrepancy of his doctrines from those of the Council of Trent? The Milesian has too frequently prejudged these questions, and made up his mind about them; nor is it likely to obtain a more candid hearing from the mere Anglo-Hibernian, who in general cares for none of these things. The extremes, indeed, of nationality, and indifference of credulity and scepticism, that have met in the discussion of these questions, and confused them by their irreconcilable contradictions, seem to have revolted many persons of inquiring and dispassionate minds; and this is probably the chief cause why the study of Irish antiquities has not sufficiently established itself in popular favor, or been followed with the same zeal in this country as similar pursuits have been in

* History of Ireland, vol. I. p. 283.

other civilized nations of Europe. The round towers and Brehon laws of Ireland; her pure dialect of an original tongue, and very ancient manuscripts; her torques, and the other golden treasures of her bogs; and, above all, her pure and primitive creed, and the true history of the actions and writings of her earliest teachers of revealed religion, are topics of exceeding interest in themselves, and capable of richly rewarding those who penetrate deeply into these mines of antiquarian wealth—and, if the research be averted, it must be by some extrinsic cause. With respect to this last and most interesting subject, and that particular portion of it which belongs to the life and works of St. Patrick, those who are most zealous for the religious character of the Isle of Saints will find, for every forgery and legend that inquiring truth is constrained to reject from the story of him whom Erin has delighted to honor as the first and principal among them, ample and just reason for bestowing on him double reverence; and the right of the genuine Patrick to the title of a true apostle of the Gospel of Christ, will be the more firmly established, the more it is freely investigated, and candidly discussed.

It would, however, be necessary to enter upon this inquiry with a very candid mind, unbiassed towards the support of any pre-conceived system; and a firm judgment, that will not be perverted, by the audacity of extravagant assertion, from deciding calmly between opinions not only opposed but contradictory. Much that is truly recorded of this eminent person, whose memory has been embalmed by tradition, and en-

shrined in the hearts of our millions, is scoffingly impugned by some of the best instructed among our gentry, and his existence has been boldly denied. "Even* the learned Dr. Lanigan," Mr. Petrie remarks, "appears to have succumbed to the difficulties that presented themselves in the consideration of this question; for, though he has laboured with great ingenuity, and even with more professional zeal than he usually displays on other subjects, to place the life of St. Patrick on a solid foundation, he has not succeeded to such an extent as would satisfy a critical inquirer; and, indeed, the very line of argument which he has chosen, has rather tended to involve the question in deeper obscurity."

These difficulties have always existed; they entangled Ussher; and, from his day even until now, they have formed a thicket around the apostle's story, both personal and national, through which no vista has ever yet been cleared. But it is not from Dr. Lanigan that we expect the accomplishment of such a work: on the contrary, from his exercise upon the subject of "more professional zeal than he usually displays," he manifests that his system was preconceived; and, doubtless, his judgment did by no means struggle against the boldness of extravagant assertion in the case; on the contrary, he was so credulous of legends, and thus easily misled, that he readily got bewildered in the labyrinth through which Dr. Led-

* Essay on the History of Tara, Trans. R.I.A. vol. xviii. p. 89.

wich, with his scepticism, was labouring to force his way.

These difficulties existed even in the seventh century. Aidus,* an Irish bishop, A.D. 698, within about 230 years of the alleged decease of St. Patrick, apologizes for the imperfection of his account of the apostle—"his knowledge being small; his authors doubtful; his memory treacherous; and, what is the worst of all, the common tradition of the country having failed to support the story." Suspicious circumstances these! and calculated to justify the conjectures of some of our modern Antiquarians.

Sir William Betham has investigated this subject with industry, and furnished us, in his *Antiquarian Researches*, with many useful hints. His theory is, "that the first apostle of Ireland, Patrick, introduced Christianity into Ireland centuries before the year 430; and Palladius was truly sent to the Scots believing in Christ, a nation of Christians, where a Christian church had long flourished in apostolic purity; and Celestine, on the spread of the Pelagian heresy in the British islands, sent Palladius on a mission to eradicate that error" (p. 258). With regard to the application of the name, he says, that the "Roman writers called many men Patrick, who, while living, never bore the name" (p. 215); and that it was a master-stroke of policy in Rome, "to give to Palladius the name and character of Patri- cius; and to obliterate the recollection of the latter,

* Book of Armagh—Betham's *Antiq. Res.*, p. 303.

from the minds and attachments of the grateful and affectionate Irish, by giving his name to a phantom raised at the end of the sixth, or beginning of the seventh century—for *Palladius* or any of his successors were not called *Patrick*, nor had the fraud been contemplated before that period."

Mr. Petrie, in his History of Tara, has also supplied us with some learned and valuable remarks respecting the individuality of St. Patrick; and he concludes them with various inferences, of which the following are important to the great object of this inquiry:—First—That there were, "at least, two teachers of Christianity in Ireland, popularly called Patrick; namely, Sen-Patrick, and Patrick the Archbishop"—in this, with some exception to the use of this title in such early ages, I entirely concur. Secondly—That the former, or old Patrick, flourished before Palladius; "was the author of the Confessio and the Irish Hymn;" and died about the year 461, and was interred at Glastonbury, "whither he had retired, as it would appear, previously to the mission of the second Patrick." This is partly the fact: but it must be remembered, that the author of the Confession could never have ended his days in Britain; for the St. Patrick who wrote that interesting document, informs us, "that the Lord, when he commanded him to undertake his mission to the Irish, desired him to remain with them during the residue of his life—*esse cum illis residuum ætatis meæ*." This divine injunction he is generally supposed to have strictly obeyed; nor can it be ad-

mitted, without strong proof of the fact, that in direct opposition to it he retired to Glastonbury, and there died. A third conjecture of Mr. Petrie is, that this second Patrick "may have been no other than the Palladius of the Roman authorities, whose life is involved in an equal degree of mystery." This is, also, the opinion of Sir W. Betham. Mr. Petrie, in another passage of his essay, when commenting upon a remarkable passage contained in the Book of Lecan, observes, that "it is of great importance, as tending to indicate, that the acts of, at least, two distinguished preachers of Christianity in Ireland may have been blended together; and thus furnishing a sufficient explanation of the chronological and other contradictions in which the various lives of our saints abound, and which, in consequence, may be regarded as the result of an anxiety, to ascribe the honour of the conversion of Ireland to a single individual."

It is clearly deducible from almost every authentic document, that the name Patricius is the *ignis fatuus* which has led so many of our early writers into error; and that, flickering here and there, and shining steadily nowhere, it has been successfully used, by the Romanists of the ninth, and subsequent centuries, to dazzle, to bewilder, and to mislead—to force upon the Irish the belief that a Roman missionary of that name was their great apostle. The first application and the meaning of this appellation are matters of much doubt—that it was conferred on several individuals is unquestionable. Sir Williar

hypothesis is, that it was bestowed upon the first apostle of Ireland, some centuries before the arrival there of Palladius; yet it is not quoted by St. Colman in the discussion of Whitby, nor does it occur any where before the seventh century. The Romanists allege that the original name of St. Patrick was Suchat; that he received that of Magonicus from St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, in France;* and, finally, that of Patricius, as some of them assert, from Pope Celestine.

With respect to its meaning, some distinguished writers† have construed it to signify, “Pater civium”—“Sonat Patricius jam pater civium”—but this seems to be inappropriate to a spiritual father, and would be unintelligible to Irish ears; yet does Patrick, in his letter to Coroticus, allude to his flock by the use of this very municipal term of “civibus meis.” A signification more generally received is the following, that the name Patricius was conferred on the saint in reference to his rank, as being of the Patrician order. But is it rational to conclude, or agreeable to any analogy, that one, whose memory an entire people desired especially to cherish and to perpetuate, should only be generally known and remembered by a foreign sound, denoting merely a temporal rank in a remote place, with which they had then but the slightest, if any, connection?—a

* Uss. Prim., 841; War. Opusc. St. Patr., p. 96; Doctor Rock, 31.

† Villanueva Opuscula S. Patr., p. 17.

title most probably never heard of by any of them ; and, certainly, as being unconnected with religion, possessing none of those powerful associations which Ireland appears to have attached to it from an early period. Some other origin, therefore, must be attributed to this appellation ; although it must be allowed to be just possible, that the name of Patricius belonged to some rank or officer, and not to any individual, if it be true that Palladius was also called by that name. Tirechan, an ancient and accredited biographer of Patrick, asserts that he was so, and Colgan and many others repeat it.

At all events there can be no doubt that this appellation was, in very early days, bestowed upon several individuals of more or less note—"præter Palladium," says Colgan, "qui et ipse Patricius appellatur, quatuor ad minus Patricii, qui sanctitatis laude in Hibernia floruerunt, a nostris Hagiographis recensentur."—We could enumerate six ; the principal persons of note, however, were not so many.

It is not necessary to dwell longer upon the difficulties that exist in tracing the history of St. Patrick, or to delay the investigation of that one point respecting him that seems most capable of distinct proof—that our apostle had no connection with Rome. What has been said will prepare the mind for forming a just conclusion concerning it, by disencumbering the argument that leads to it from extrinsic matter ; and by opening the eyes of the reader to perceive how ingeniously modern Roman fiction has interwoven itself with ancient Hibernian truth, and thus fabri-

cated a web of such doubtful hue, that it is impracticable to decide whether the scarlet or green thread prevail, or where, or how they separate or blend. This confusion originates in an artful and bold misapplication of a venerated name: and it is not the first instance of such an experiment having been made, and with success, by papal Rome; for the stories of her original connection with St. Peter, and her subsequent one with St. Patrick, will be found, upon inquiry, to be erected upon bases equally unsubstantial, and similarly composed of fiction and of truth.

It is a tradition, sanctioned by universal and continued reception in Ireland—"semper, ubique, et ab omnibus,"—and the truth of which is even realized by the halo of fable that surrounds it, that, at the latest, fourteen centuries ago, this island was blessed by the apostolic visit of a mysterious individual, whom we shall henceforth designate by the popular name of St. Patrick. The course of the following argument abounds with well-authenticated facts and references to ancient documents—for instance, the Book of Armagh, just quoted—which demonstrate his existence. It would be useless repetition to exhibit them here; but there is one testimony to it so striking and so obvious that it should not be withheld. It is the nomenclature stamped, a thousand years ago, upon cathedrals, abbeys, and churches throughout Ireland; and echoing, also, from every mountain and headland within it, the name of St. Patrick, and also that of St. Columbkille. This testimony, afforded by these ancient buildings, is equivalent to that of monu-

mental inscriptions, coeval with the time of their first receiving their name of dedication; and it almost every where attests, that a tradition then prevailed of the previous existence of some great personages so denominated—some favourite apostles, to whom Erin considered herself to be deeply indebted for inestimable spiritual benefits.

Between the extremes of an absolute denial of the existence of St. Patrick, and an implicit faith in his legendary history, a safe and middle way may surely be traced; and, in following the truth, the most certain, though not the most obvious fact, is the following, that:—

ST. PATRICK WAS NOT COMMISSIONED OR SENT FROM ROME, TO PREACH THE GOSPEL; OR TO FOUND, OR CONFIRM, A CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

This opinion* was for a long time holden in diffidence and in silence by those who ventured to entertain it; because, perhaps, of the decided manner in which the contrary was asserted by the Romanists, and acquiesced in even by the celebrated Ussher. It has, however, of late years gained ground in the minds of Antiquarians; Dr. Ledwich greatly retarded its general

* It must be expected that this proposition will be very revolting to those who receive, as an axiom, the following bold assertion of Dr. Rock (Letter to Lord J. Manners, p. 34):—“Indeed, St. Patrick’s mission by Rome is so strongly borne out by *all* antiquity, that learned Irishmen, though Protestants, for very shame’s sake, durst not shut their eyes to it, or deny it.”

reception, by attempting to prove too much. The late Dr. Phelan—in his “Case of the Church of Ireland,” &c., by “Declan,”—has avoided his extreme, and gone far in exhibiting the fallacy of the arguments upon which the fact of this Roman Mission rests. But although many give assent to the assertion, it is generally considered to be a truth incapable of direct proof, that St. Patrick was not an emissary of the Romish See ; it will, however, appear that the ordinary rules of legal evidence enable us to establish it by demonstration. In attempting this, we are, it is true, driven to maintain a negative position ; the difficulty of doing which is obvious, it is not unlike that of defending a besieged and regular fortress—the assailants may come with their entire positive force upon what point they please ; the besieged must spread theirs, to cover every portion of their intrenchments. It would, indeed, at first view appear, that their only strength would lie in the weakness of the assault—and our only resource, to rebut the positive allegations of the other side, by showing the want of credibility in the witnesses. But we are not limited to this—it is acknowledged as a rule of law,* that “a well-supported and consistent body of circumstantial evidence is sometimes *stronger* than even direct evidence of a fact ; *i. e.*, the degree of uncertainty arising from a doubt as to the credibility of direct witnesses, may exceed that which arises upon the question, whether a proper inference has been

* Starkie’s Evid. vol. 1. p. 49.

made from facts well ascertained." This goes upon the principle, that the direct testimony of a few witnesses is more likely to be false, than that a consistent body of circumstances, each of them established by undeniable proof, is likely to be fabricated. Let us apply this principle to the question before us—it is one to which the principle is remarkably appropriate.

The body of circumstances which I would most confidently bring forward to disprove the fact alleged, of St. Patrick's connection with Rome, may all be brought under the arrangement of one head—the perfect, unanimous, and undoubted silence upon the subject, for full four centuries after the arrival of St. Patrick, of all the writers and documents, to whom and to which we would naturally turn for information respecting it; and again, the direct evidence of the modern witnesses who have pressed in to prove it, and whose credibility I would now impugn, I would yet further invalidate, by exhibiting their variance and inconsistency.

The argument of silence relied on in this case is peculiarly strong; it is the perfect silence of all cotemporary writers, and of others living near the times in question; persons who would not have forbore to mention the fact alleged if it were really the truth, but were under every possible inducement to enhance it, and even temptation to invent it. This silence is, as I have said, universal, comprehending also that of St. Patrick; and maintained for four hundred years from the period of his alleged existence;

we shall commence with the silence of St. Patrick himself.

It is not at present necessary to enter into the inquiry, whether the writings attributed to our apostle be genuine or not ; for all of them that are not decidedly spurious, bear on them the following stamp, and are rendered current by this indorsement—that they have been considered authentic by Romanists—that they have been preserved, and presented to us by them ; and that they existed with them in manuscript long before the reformation in religion, and so could not have been forged or interpolated by Protestants to suit any of their peculiar opinions. They are therefore documents produced and relied on by the Romanists themselves, and borrowed by us from among their own most venerated records. If, then, in these works thus circumstanced, there be not any, the most distant allusion to Rome, or to the Papal See, as the source of Patrick's mission to this island ; if her name be scarcely mentioned in them, and be quite omitted from the Confession, or his letter to the Irish—if, I repeat it, in this, the most genuine and detailed, as well as interesting of all these documents, not one word savouring of papal origin, or papal authority, or papal doctrines, or even the pope himself occur, where the subject would naturally induce the continued mention of some, or all of these, were the writer connected with Rome, we must arrive at the unavoidable conclusion from the author's silence on these points, that they did not exist as facts to be alluded to, or recorded.

In the first place, St. Patrick, in this letter, details very fully his motives for undertaking his visit to Ireland, but without the slightest reference to Rome or her bishops as their source. He tells us that he is "bound by the spirit."—"It was not myself, but the Lord Christ that commanded me to come hither, and also to remain here during the rest of my life." "*Et non ego, sed Christus Dominus, qui me imperavit ut venirem;*" and "*esse cum illis residuum ætatis meæ.*" Nor does he in the least allude to the motive of extirpating heresy in Ireland, or to any commission given to him for that purpose by the Pope, such as has been found out for him by some of his biographers. Again, he urges his doctrines with authority, but it is never papal or human, it is that of the Holy Scriptures alone; and this he always enforces upon every topic with strength and reverence, as if the slightest tenet that he imposes as Christian, is to be received under the impress of the Holy Spirit only, and on the sole obligation of obedience to God's word. The version of the Bible that he makes use of is not that of Jerome, which at that period was the authorised one of Rome; and the books which he quotes as inspired are, some of them, not in the canon sanctioned by that father, and at that time received by the Holy See. With respect to his teaching, there is not one word in his confession, I might add, in his accredited writings, by which any of the peculiar doctrines of the Romish Church are in the slightest degree inculcated. Some of these, no doubt, were not in that age invented; but the writings of St. Patrick are entirely

clear of any connection whatsoever with those that were even then insinuating themselves among the tenets of the Primitive Christian Church. So that if Patrick were a missionary from Rome, he was either, as the writer of those documents, a most faithless and ungrateful emissary ; or they are erroneously attributed to him—and whosoever believes him to have been true to his commission, and to be truly their author, must believe that he received that commission, not from any Pope, but from the great head of the Church ; as indeed the Apostle himself has declared it.

There is but one way of meeting this argument, and that is, by alleging that the papal tenets were, at that time, free from the errors of the Council of Trent ; and that they really were such as Patrick taught, and modern Protestants maintain. My Romanist antagonists may resort to this argument if they please.

I have said that there is not a trace of the peculiarities of modern Romanism in the confession, unless we reckon among them a tendency to enlarge upon miraculous interferences of God. But, besides that superstition of this kind was universal in that age, it might very well consist with the rejection of a Roman Catholic creed ; and, indeed, we find St. Colman, in his contest with Wilfred, resting the proof of Columba's high authority and holiness on this—that “ God hath confirmed it with miracles.” The instances also in the confession are, in fact, not very extraordinary ; and none of them, like those of modern legends, revolting. But the point which I would especially urge, as affording the strongest possible argument, at once in favor of the

authenticity and antiquity of this Epistle, and of the truth of the assertion that St. Patrick was not connected with Rome, is the perfect freedom that it exhibits of any mention of the Virgin or Saints, their merits or intercession. This is, indeed, particularly remarkable—prayer, advocacy, intercession, abound in this interesting document ; but “*Dominus advocatus est noster,*” and “*ipse postulat pro nobis,*” is exclusively the tenor of the Epistle. “I was,” says the writer, “frequent in prayer ; and the love and fear of God increased more and more, and faith increased, and the Spirit. I remained even in the woods, and in the mountain, and rose before dawn to prayer, in snow, or frost, or rain—and felt no evil ; nor was there any sloth in me, *because that then the Spirit burned within me !*” Yet, with such an opportunity to honor them, he does not ever mention any of the great advocates or intercessors, that are now inseparable from an orthodox Romanist prayer. The fact, in the first instance, demonstrates the document to be genuine ; for it is impossible that one so deficient in Romanist faith could have been fabricated by the true sons of the Church, who have been its guardians from the beginning ; it also shows it to be ancient, and antecedent to the encroachments of papal corruptions : and it is decisive to prove, either that St. Patrick did not imbibe his religious tenets at Rome ; or that, if he did, the doctrines inculcated in his day were essentially different from the following, now taught by the Catechism of the Council of Trent :—“that the Saints who reign together with Christ are to be venerated and

invoked"—"Sanctos unâ cum Christo regnantes, venerandos atque invocandos esse."

The Roman Catholic writers, indeed, are fully aware of the value of this mode of reasoning; and, conscious of the argument that St. Patrick's *silence* would, in this instance, afford against their practices, have sifted this epistle, in the hope of discovering something that would favour their predilections. Even the more ingenuous Dr. Lanigan is led by his zeal to produce from it a sentence, where St. Patrick calls upon Elias, as a proof that he thought the invocation of saints both "commendable and salutary." (Eccl. Hist. vol. 1, p. 151.) The passage translated is thus:—after telling us that he was greatly tempted in his sleep, subsequent to long fasting, and that he felt all his strength removed, and that it was as if an immense rock had fallen upon him, he says—"But how it happened I know not, that I should invoke Elias. And I saw the sun rise in the heavens; and, whilst I exclaimed Elias, Elias! with all my strength, behold the splendor of that sun; and immediately it struck off from me all weight. And I believe myself assisted by my Christ, and that his spirit even then importuned for me. And I hope that it will be thus in the day of my distress, as the Lord bears witness in his Gospel." The passage is interesting; but I marvel that Dr. Lanigan should construe it into the approval of a practice, as "commendable and salutary," which it declares to have been the temptation of Satan, and, as it were, the effect of an unwholesome dream; especially as the saint attributes

the relief that he experienced to the sole advocacy of Christ, and of that Spirit which "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." It would appear that St. Patrick in this passage had in view the following text in Mark, xv. 34, 35, where our Lord, in his great suffering, exclaims, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani!" and that Dr. Lanigan has fallen into the same error as some of the Jews, who said upon that occasion—"Behold, he calleth Elias." At the close of this epistle there is a passage that seems to advert to this event, and affords some illustration of its meaning. In alluding to the sun, an object of worship among the Pagan Irish, he says—"Nam sol iste quem vidimus, illo jubente, propter nos quotidie oritur, sed numquam regnabit," &c. "nos autem credimus et adoramus solem verum Christum," &c. It appears then to me, that the entire transaction admits of this obvious solution. The apostle, while greatly exhausted by fasting, and excited by the horrid superstitions of the Irish in their adoration of the sun, (Baal, or $\eta\lambda\iota\omicron\varsigma$ in the Greek), falls into a disturbed sleep, and is assaulted by the temptations of Satan in his dreams. He imagines that he invokes the God of the Pagan Irish; and, awakening in all the horrors of such idolatry, he is fully relieved by the instantaneous rising of Christ, "the true sun," upon his soul. All this is perfectly natural. This instance proves the readiness of the Roman Catholic advocate to avail himself of any, the least, assimilation to Romanist doctrines, that might occur in this epistle; while it exhibits how perfectly

exempt it is from any such interpolation ; since so much is attempted to be made of so small a matter as this, and his professional zeal has led him to draw a conclusion so illogical in all its parts.

There is another instance of a material perversion of the words of St. Patrick, by a Romanist writer—it is where Doctor Rock has gone so far as to assert, that “ the groundwork of belief laid down among the Irish by St. Patrick, was the headship and supremacy of the Roman See ; and thence is it that the same blessed man, in his letter to Coroticus, hails the Romans with the epithet of holy.”

It has been asserted that St. Patrick, in such of his writings as appear to be genuine, has made no allusion to Rome, as connected with his mission and his doctrines ; but since the mere mention of the name is thus readily construed to be an evidence of connection with her communion, nay, of acquiescence in her usurped authority, it will be necessary to examine the passages in the letter to Coroticus, in which that mention does occur ; especially as they not only warrant us in drawing a conclusion entirely different from that above-mentioned, but exhibit a view of circumstances in our church, such as it flourished in the time of St. Patrick, that demonstrate, beyond a possibility of doubt, if the epistle be genuine, its independent existence.

St. Patrick is addressing the pirate Coroticus on behalf of his Christian captives—“ *Consuetudo*,” he says, “ *Romanorum et Gallorum Christianorum*—mittunt viros idoneos ad Francos et exterarum gentes, cum

tot mil. solidorum, ad redimendos captivos baptizatos!" "It is the custom of the Roman and Gallican Christians, to send fit persons to the Franks and foreign nations, with money to redeem baptized captives." From this interesting passage it is manifest that, at the time of writing this epistle, there were Christians in Ireland, so many in number, so truly Catholic in spirit, so competent in means, so possessed of opportunity and power, that they were in the habit of sending their silver coin in thousands, to redeem from captivity in foreign lands, their baptized brethren that had fallen into the hands of pirates.* It is clear also that these Christians were divided into *two distinct* communities, or sects, or churches, of which the Roman was one, and the Gallican the other. The fact cannot be denied, unless we reject the document that testifies to it, as being spurious, or interpolated. But, as to this point, although the genuineness of the epistle to Coroticus does not rest upon the same strong foundation as that of the Confession, (since, for instance, it is not to be found with this letter in the Book of Armagh,) yet it is tolerably well authenticated, and savors throughout of great antiquity; and, as I have more than once observed of all the works attributed to St.

* The words of this letter are remarkable—"Tu toties interficis et vendis illos genti exteræ ignoranti Deum;" and, again, "Ibi venundati ingenui homines Christiani in servitutum redacti sunt, presertim indignissimorum pessimorum apostatorumque Pictorum." This Coroticus is conjectured to have been Caradoc of Wales.

Patrick, it has been preserved by Romanists, and by them transmitted to us from the remotest ages, with their broad seal of approbation annexed. Its contents therefore are conclusive against them.

There is another passage in this epistle that makes mention of Rome—its meaning cannot be mistaken, if we bring to illustrate it the sentences which have just now been noticed. St. Patrick, in stating the occasion of his writing this letter, says—“*Et manu meâ scripsi atque condidi verba ista, danda ac tradenda militibus mittanda Corotici ; non dico civibus meis atque civibus sanctorum Romanorum, sed civibus dæmoniorum, ob mala opera ipsorum,*” &c. “These words have I written, I do not say to *my* people or those of the holy Romans,” &c. Now this passage, in whatever sense it be taken, distinctly corroborates the fact which the former sentence establishes, viz. : that there were two communities existing in Ireland at the period when Patrick wrote ; while it goes still further to demonstrate, that the Roman was not that which he appropriated to himself. If, therefore, he calls these latter *holy*, it cannot be deduced from thence, that he acknowledges the supremacy of their head ; on the contrary, if he be supposed to use the term “*civibus*” in reference to a religious community, the other, to wit, the Gallican (*Gallorum*), he claims to be *his*—“*civibus meis.*” It is not clear in what sense the apostle uses the word “*civis*”—it is manifestly not in a municipal one, and perhaps the term “*people*” will express it best. Those who derive the name of Patricius thus—“*Sonat Patricius jam pater*

civium"—had the pastoral character of Patrick in view in the application of the name. He employs the epithet "sanctorum" to denote the Christian character of the baptized who were on the side of Christ, in opposition to the demoniacal one of the apostate soldiers of Coroticus—and it is most probable, that in using that of "Romanorum," he alluded to a people the inhabitants of Britain, simply as such, and without any reference to the Romish See. Archbishop Ussher, in his *Primordia*, (p. 409,) informs us thus—"Britannia olim Romana insula (ut eam vocat Prosper) habebatur; atque ita Romanum nomen tenebat, testante Gildâ, ut non Britannia sed Romania censeatur." Britain, as a Roman island, was formerly called Romania—appealing to the ancient testimony of Gildas. This application of the epithet Roman, it must be remarked, bears reference, not to the see but to the empire of Rome. Be this as it may, the simple and obvious meaning of Patrick, in the paragraph under consideration, is this—that his letter is addressed to the unhallowed soldiers of Coroticus, some of whom were apostates both of the Picts and Scots, and not to his faithful people at home, or to the Roman Christians: but whether these Christians were Romans of the empire or of the see is immaterial to the argument; for, as I have before remarked, he makes his party with the other, or Gallican community.

The fact here revealed, of the existence at the time of St. Patrick, of two Christian communities in Ireland, the Gallican and the Roman, (perhaps a branch

of the ancient Britons of the Roman empire,) receives further warrant from a canon of St. Patrick's (the 33rd,) that "a clergyman who comes over to us from Britain without a letter, shall not exercise his ministry."

The absence of any hue of later Romanist doctrine, or of any mention of Roman connection, is remarkable in the other supposed genuine works of St. Patrick; but, as none of these possess the authentic and uninterpolated character of the Confession, I shall notice only one other of them here, and that is a celebrated relic—a hymn that is attributed to our Saint. It is preserved among the MSS. of Archbishop Ussher, in the library of the Dublin University; and all the truths or legends that exist connected with it have been given to the public, in Mr. Petrie's account of Tara before mentioned (Trans. R. I. A. vol. xviii.) It is there presented entire to the reader. The original MS. is of the most undoubted antiquity; and I consider the hymn itself more likely to be authentic, than any other of the existing works of St. Patrick, his Confession excepted. It also is free from any taint of modern and peculiar Romanism; and this it manifests in a very remarkable prayer, with which it concludes, and which is far too interesting to abbreviate much. It is as follows:—"May Christ be with me, Christ before me, Christ after me, Christ in me," and so on. "May Christ be in the heart of every person to whom I may speak, Christ in the mouth of every one that may speak to me, Christ in every eye that may see me, Christ in every ear that may hear me. At Temor," (Tara) "this day I invoke the

almighty power of the Trinity. I believe in the Trinity, under the unity of the God of elements." So far in Irish ; it concludes in Latin thus : " Domini est salus, Domini est salus, Christi est salus. Salus tua, Domine, sit semper nobiscum."

Such is the primitive purity of expression, and of expressive silence also, that distinguish the works of St. Patrick ; writings, whose authenticity it is not for us to question—documents, which, " I must again repeat it," we could not have fabricated or falsified, and to which Protestants could never have given either origin or authority.

We now proceed to consider what Dr. Phelan has called the "ominous silence" of the venerable Bede. This celebrated writer, whose credibility is especially relied on by Romanists, was zealous, almost to bigotry, for the spread of the Papal authority ; in fact, a favorite object of all his writings is the exaltation of Rome ; yet he also is silent as to the Roman mission of Patrick—nor does he once record his name in his Ecclesiastical History, not even in that part of it—the third book—which is almost entirely dedicated to the history of the ancient Irish church. Bede wrote his book within less than three centuries from the period of St. Patrick's arrival in Ireland ; he could not have been ignorant of the origin of his mission ; and it was impossible for him, if it could have been traced to Rome, to have omitted the mention of the fact, where he details the history of that celebrated Synod of Whitby, that was holden A.D. 664, to settle some matters of dispute between the Irish and Anglo-Saxon churches.

I shall greatly enlarge upon this most important part of Bede's history, when I come to treat of the eastern origin of our national Church, upon which question it particularly bears ; and merely state here, that the entire of the reasoning at this Synod was based upon the ancient authorities that existed, to recommend the different and inconsistent customs for which the adverse parties contended. In quoting these, St. Colman adduces the practice of St. Columba, as of a great father of the Irish Church, and traces it through him to the evangelist, St. John—but he does not even mention St. Patrick's name. Wilfred, on the other hand, brings up his customs to the authority of Rome, and claims for St. Peter a higher commission from his Divine Master. If he could, with truth, have put forward the teaching of St. Patrick as of an ancient emissary from Rome, and the most orthodox apostle of the Irish ; could he have thus established a link between his opponent and that See, he, doubtless, would have done so—in fact, it would have neutralised all the argument of St. Colman, and at once determined the question in dispute between them. Yet Wilfred is silent ; and never once makes mention of either St. Patrick's commission, or his name. Still further, the excuse which he makes for the Irish, whose irregularities he is willing to indulge in consideration of their ignorance, demonstrates that no such Roman teacher as Patrick had been among them. He had just spoken of Columba with an indifference bordering on contempt ; but, relaxing somewhat of his sternness, he apologises for him and his followers thus :—“ as

touching your Columba, &c., neither do I think that their manner of their observation of Easter (the principal subject of contest at the Synod) could be much prejudicial against them, as long as they had yet * received no instructions to the contrary ; but rather verily suppose, seeing such commandments of God as they knew they willingly performed, they also would have conformed to the Catholic judgment, *if they had been so informed.*"

It will perhaps be said, that Wilfred of course abstained from referring to St. Patrick, because that he had been the person that brought into Ireland the very practice respecting Easter that he contended against ; "for," say the advocates for Roman connection, "when St. Patrick came on his mission to Ireland, he introduced the same method of Paschal computation which was then taught at Rome ;" and which, though afterwards changed by the Romans, remained still unaltered by the Irish, who pertinaciously abided by it, because it was taught to them by their great apostle. (Moore's Hist., v. 1, p. 268.) But this is a gratuitous assumption, and in all its parts directly opposed to the fact. In the first instance it is silenced by the assertion of St. Colman who declares, that the reason why they so pertinaciously abided by their custom was, because they had received it, not from Rome through Patrick, but through Columba from St. John.

* Bede Eccl. Hist. Lib. 3 c. 25, Stapleton's translation. The passage is stronger in the original—"Quamdiu nullus advenerat qui eis instituti perfectioris decreta quem sequerentur ostenderet."

Again, if St. Patrick had indeed brought the Paschal time from Rome, it must have been that which was used there A.D. 432 ; and that is the very time which Wilfred recommended, and not that against which he contended ; for the Roman church had, ever since the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, adopted that time for the celebration of the feast which the Roman advocate argued for, and which is now in general use throughout Christendom.

So far respecting the proper day for the celebration of Easter. We shall soon see that the cycle also for computing it, used by the Irish, was not given to them by St. Patrick. We shall resume the subject of this controversy ; and, for the present, be contented with producing this silence of Colman, and of Wilfred, united with that of Bede throughout all his history, as “ a proper inference from facts well ascertained,” that St. Patrick was not known, at the periods when Wilfred argued and Bede reported, as an emissary to Ireland from Rome. Already may we place it in advantageous contrast, according to our assumed principle of evidence, with the “ uncertainty arising from a doubt as to the credibility of the direct witnesses ;” when we perceive such intelligent historians as Dr. Lanigan and Mr. Moore, misled by these into the confident promulgation of systems, that are totally at variance with the accounts of the best Romanist historians, the facts as evidenced by the decrees of councils, and the well-known course of events recorded in Papal history.

But if corroboration of any of these circumstances,

or of the reasoning from them, be required, we possess it in the celebrated letter of Cummiānus junior. This intelligent epistle was addressed, about A.D. 630, to Segienus, the then abbot of Iona, with the view of exhibiting to him the error in which the Scots continued while they abided by their ancient mode of celebrating Easter. He mentions St. Patrick in connection with this great question, not at all as the introducer of the days to which they obstinately adhered, on that head he is silent, but as the teacher of a cycle which they actually rejected. He mentions him, indeed, but not as having been in any way connected with Rome. Although he honours him with the epithet "Papa"—a title then given universally to the clergy of episcopal rank—he shows that his paternal teachings were entirely neglected, not "pertinaciously adhered to;" and, by his no less ominous silence respecting the saint's Papal mission, he affords us a link in the chain of circumstantial evidence which brings us still nearer to Patrick's time. This silence, also, of Cummiānus is a circumstance still more remarkable than that of Colman, or of Wilfred, or of Bede. His letter details, with great minuteness, the process by which the southern Scots had obtained their convictions, and had been induced to receive the paschal computation of Christendom. It was the result of a journey to Rome; where their deputation, having observed the agreement of the universal church in the new method proposed, recommended it to their constituents, who forthwith adopted it. It is manifest that, had they valued it for Patrick's sake, who, in the

very same letter is noticed as the promulgator of a rejected cycle in Ireland, and had this value been enhanced by his having imported it from Rome, the fact must have come out in some way or other. If Rome had been either his spiritual birth-place, or the cradle of the ancient Irish, we cannot imagine how it could have remained, under the circumstances of the case, entirely unnoticed.

To these instances of silence we have yet to add others that are equally remarkable—to wit, that of St. Columbanus, who flourished still nearer than St. Cummian to the apostle's time ; and of Prosper, who was actually his contemporary, and who, also, has omitted from his chronicle even the mention of his name. Columbanus writes to the Pope Gregory I. to assert his rights, and protect his church from being interfered with, by the Pontiff and his clergy, in their mode of celebrating Easter. Had Patrick been what the Romanists contend for, precisely the same reasons exist for Columbanus to have quoted him as there were in the case of Wilfred ; yet he, too, does not even record his name. The same deductions may, therefore, be here made from this fact of silence, as are drawn from that of Wilfred, only more conclusively, as the letter of Columbanus is 60 years more ancient than the synod of Whitby ; and, (which is of still more importance), Columbanus was an Irishman, and, of course, better acquainted than Wilfred with the history and traditions of the Irish church. He is also the ancient writer, of all others, that goes nearest to connect Ireland with Rome. His silence,

therefore, respecting St. Patrick is especially *ominous*. "The importance of the mission by Prosper," says Dr. Phelan (*Declan*, p. 63, and seq.), "will at once be perceived from the following considerations—Prosper was the friend, the counsellor, the panegyrist of Pope Celestine. By his advice, Celestine, in the year 431, sent a Roman bishop, named Palladius, to some societies of Christians that had settled in Ireland." Dr. Phelan then mentions the failure and death of Palladius in January, 432, the asserted new commission from Celestine to Patrick, and the Pope's subsequent death in 432. "Now, Prosper," he proceeds to observe, "published his *Chronicle* many years after.* He was disposed to do full justice to the spiritual achievements of the deceased Pontiff, yet he does not mention Patrick. Palladius came to Ireland, staid a few weeks, built three chapels, and ran away; but, because Palladius was sent by Celestine, Prosper has commemorated the brief and ignoble effort. On the other hand, when Prosper published the last edition of his *Chronicle*, Patrick had been 23 years in Ireland, and his ministry had been blessed with the most signal success. Why, then, does he not mention Patrick?" In fine, although these many instances of silence are insufficient as proofs of his non-existence, when weighed against the authorities that demonstrate the contrary, they unite, doubtless, as a decisive circumstance to

* This alludes to the year of the publication of the last edition of the third of his *Chronicles*. "Prosper wrote his book in 433."—*Declan*, 65.

prove that he was not known as a Roman missionary to Bede, the faithful chronicler of the Irish church, as well as of Papal missionary zeal, in 730—to Cumrianus and to Columbanus, whose neglect to notice him as such, above a century earlier, could not have been the result of mere carelessness—or to Prosper, his contemporary, who would have gladly recorded any connection between so renowned and prosperous an agent, and the patron whom he sought to exalt. I should also add, that, in the hymn of St. Fiech, written about the year 700, in which a short account is given of Patrick's early connections with Italy and the Continent, there is not one word of Rome, or the slightest allusion to his mission thence or ordination there. Let this matter be now referred to the decision of common sense. Surely it would be scarce possible to omit all mention of Luther in an Ecclesiastical History of Germany, even if it were to be now, for the first time, penned—still less, in letters written but one hundred years after his death, on the general interests of its church and her schisms—least of all, in the work of a cotemporary annalist, and partizan of his doctrines. Could it be a possible thing that he should begin to be noticed as a Reformer only now, for the first time, at this distance of three centuries from the period in which he signalized himself?

We can have very little doubt as to the verdict which the common sense of mankind, under the direction of the rules of evidence, would afford us on this part of the case; and, even were it referred solely to

the arbitration of Dr. Lanigan, we should expect from his justice a favourable decision also. In writing of the journey which St. Patrick is said, by some of his biographers, to have made to Rome, immediately on the death of Palladius, he says—(c. vii. s. 10. Note. 4.) “It is strange, that the Bollandists have admitted this pretended journey of Patrick to Rome; they might have observed, that, *had it taken place, it would have been mentioned* in some of the Roman or other documents of the day : ” by a parity of reason, the Romanist historian must admit—in the case of the equally pretended journey of Patrick *from* Rome—that, “*had it taken place, it would have been mentioned* in some of the Roman or other documents of the day.”

This remarkable silence, so universal among the Roman documents and historians, must, therefore, be admitted as conclusive. It was first relied on by Doctor Ryves, judge of the Prerogative court in Ireland; he, in a course of judicial inquiry, suggested doubts to Primate Ussher respecting even the existence of St. Patrick, and rested much upon that of Platina, who, in his life of Pope Celestine, makes no mention whatsoever of his name. Ussher thought but little of the instance, as Platina is an author of late date—“The objection,” he says, “would be far more specious, if it were from the silence of Bede.” Doctor Ryves, however, went too far in denying the *existence* of our saint upon the evidence of silence, for it does not warrant that conclusion, since, respecting this point, it is not universal; but it justifies, and

even compels us to this reasonable deduction, that the saint had no connection with Rome. Every existing document previous to the ninth century—historical, biographical—Bull, Epistle, or other record, foreign or domestic,*—unite in forming this great body of negative testimony, which, in the pauses of Milesian and Romanist zeal, speaks irresistibly with the still small voice of truth.

The conclusion, therefore, “that St. Patrick was not commissioned or sent from Rome to preach the Gospel, or to found or confirm a christian church in Ireland,” must be admitted to be “a proper inference from facts well ascertained”—“a well supported and consistent body of circumstantial evidence”—establishing, at the least, a *prima facie* case so strong, as to require very decided evidence to rebut it or bring it into doubt. But, to make it more perfect, we shall sift that contrary evidence, and exhibit the “uncertainty, arising from a doubt as to the credibility of the direct witnesses,” that it affords.

In the first instance it is most important to observe, that the result of all that has been hitherto said must be, to prepare a fatal objection to the entire body of adverse testimony; for, if the total

* The first writer that makes any mention of St. Patrick as connected with Rome is Nennius, an historian who flourished about the year 858, (vide Ledwich, 67;) this is distant more than four centuries from A. D. 432, the alleged date of the apostle's arrival in this island. The next is Probus of the ninth century, a biographer of that saint; others are enumerated by Doctor Rock, (p. 24,) who labours to enhance their testimony.

silence of four centuries respecting the Roman connection of St. Patrick be clearly proved, it follows that all the evidence of a later period that can be adduced to demonstrate it, must be of a secondary nature—mere hearsay—and such also as, passing through the darkest ages, must be considered to be utterly valueless as tradition. * We have seen that Aidus, in the year 698, complains of the contradictions of the existing traditions ; and, in truth, the notorious fallacies with which the early legends of the Romish Patrick abound, and the strong motive that existed among their fabricators to propagate an invention which did such honour to their great idol, the Papal church, reduce their hearsay evidence to the lowest possible grade, and make it impossible to distinguish the fabulous from the true in their testimony. The consequence has been the greatest inconsistency, contradiction, and ambiguity, in the more modern followers of these blind leaders.

The story most generally acquiesced in by ancient writers is, that St. Patrick was by birth a Briton ; was first a pupil of his uncle, St. Martin of Tours, and then studied for eighteen years with Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre ; that by him he was sent to Rome, and was ordained bishop by Pope Celestine, and commissioned to preach the Gospel in Ireland. These facts are few and simple, yet so ill established

* Tirechan, whose very early life of St. Patrick appears in the Book of Armagh, informs us that what he records he had received from the mouth of Ultan the bishop.

by the authorities of the middle age, that every one of them has been an occasion of contradiction among moderns. Thus, Dr. Lanigan and Mr. Moore will have Patrick to have been a Briton of Brittany, in France ; Sir W. Betham, Doctor Rock, and others, a Briton of our sister isle. All these, excepting Sir William, with many others, acknowledge him as the nephew of St. Martin—Sir William* says that to believe it requires great faith indeed. While the assertion of his visit to Rome, and his ordination there, although acquiesced in most generally, is thus qualified, if not denied, by the comparatively ingenuous Doctor Lanigan—Finding it impossible to fix this journey between the death of Palladius and the commencement of Patrick's ministry, he invents the hypothesis, "that St. Patrick was ordained second in the mission" by Pope Celestine, "though not consecrated bishop at the same time with Palladius ;" and that, upon the death of his predecessor, St. Patrick proceeded no farther than Gaul, and was there consecrated bishop by one Amathus, Amatorex, or Amator (Declan, 65, and Petrie, 106, and 108). A lameness of conclusion this, which might have been avoided by

* Beth. 290.—"Palladius, or one of his successors, was probably the nephew of Martin of Tours. The first Patrick was a Briton, or rather a Roman of Britain ; to suppose him nephew of Martin of Tours, requires great faith, even to remove mountains." Yet I believe that the St. Patrick of the Book of Armagh was so. That ancient MS. contains the life of St. Martin, by Sulpicius Severus ; and it also has preserved the most ancient and authentic copy of the Confession.

the laborious and intelligent historian, had he contemplated the possibility of the apostle's never having been at Rome at all. To these discrepancies very many could be added ; but enough is here said to manifest the want of credibility in the most ancient witnesses to the fact at issue, when we perceive that their testimony has not, in any case, been sufficient to constrain the agreement of moderns in forming from it their deductions.

I cannot close this series of evidence with a better summary than the following of Dr. Phelan :—“ Upon the subject of the Roman mission of Patrick, these documents maintain a profound and eloquent silence. They tell us the place of his birth, and the place of his education—who instructed him, who ordained him, who sent him to preach in Ireland—and, finally, they show that, after the commencement of his ministry, he never left the island. On the other hand, it has appeared that the adherents of Rome are as silent concerning Patrick, as Patrick and his disciples with respect to Rome. How, then, is the Roman hypothesis sustained by the learned and zealous writers of whom I speak? They take refuge in those obscure and recent legends, *which they are ashamed to quote, when maintaining the existence of St. Patrick* ; and which, on every other occasion, they reject with a contempt as undisguised as it is merited. And yet, after all, they cannot agree. Drs. Milner and O'Connor assert that Patrick was ordained by Celestine ; Dr. Lanigan, after, as he declares, ‘the labour and close application of many

years—after having collected every tract and document that he could meet with,' gives the ordination to an unknown bishop in an unknown place. Again, Dr. O'Connor thinks himself very safe, when he states that Patrick was not at Rome earlier than the year 402; but Dr. Lanigan will not allow him to have been there for twenty-nine years after. Still further, Dr. Milner says, that in the year 461* Patrick went to Rome, to render an account of his ministry to the Pope; the Irishmen, more candid, or more wary than their fellow-labourer, reject the account as a fable. In fine, except upon the one *indispensable point*, these learned men oppose each other with as little ceremony as they controvert Dr. Ledwich; and for *that* point, they reverse the natural order of evidence—they *assume* that Patrick *must* have had a commission from Rome, and they *conjecture when and how* he obtained it. Instead of deriving their hypothesis from facts, they ground their facts upon a hypothesis."

There are some writers of high authority that take an earlier notice of St. Patrick, though they say nothing of Rome; but the greater the number that record him without any mention of that city or its

* Ledwich, p. 65.—He was supposed to have gone to Rome to obtain the pall and legateship from Pope Hilarinus A.D., 462. The fact is in contradiction, as we have seen, to his own Confession; and the story of the pall to the testimony of St. Bernard. Doctor Talbot, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, in his "*Jus Primatiæ Armachanæ*," calls all this a fiction—"that St. Patrick was neither Archbishop, Primate, or Metropolitan; that his pall is chimerical," &c.

bishop or doctrines, and the more they magnify his actions and relate them with complacency, the more they afford of evidence that he was independent of that See—the more ominous their silence on that head. It is foreign to my purpose to detail these accounts, which establish his existence and but little more; I must, however, point out how early some of them have been corrupted, in order to accommodate them to the process of modern invention or interpolation. The hymn of St. Fiech, a celebrated composition of the year 700, or thereabouts, relates the early history of St. Patrick, without alluding to Rome; it has, however, been somewhat altered to form the ground of modern legend. The word Alba (Albion) has been converted into Alpa, and that of Letha (Armorica) into Latium, in order that St. Patrick might appear to have crossed the Alps and visited Rome. The true reading of these words has been acknowledged and restored, by Colgan and Lanigan,* and O'Connor.

The name of St Patrick is recorded in the martyrologies of Bede; which are works ascribed indeed to him, but not undoubtedly his. Of these there are two; one in prose, the other in verse. The former is confessed by Dr. Lanigan to be interpolated, and with him O'Connor and Mabillon agree; it records thus, “Decimo sexto Kalendas Aprilis, in Scotiâ, S. Patricii Confessoris.” The latter contains the following line, which is quite doubtful both as to person and

* Declan p. 73 and 67.

day—"Patricius, Domini servus, conscendit ad aulam." Ussher rejected the testimony of these martyrologies, which, at the best, bear witness to the existence of the Saint, and not to his connection with Rome.

One argument, however, in support of the opinion of a Roman mission, remains yet to be disposed of. "If," says Doctor Lanigan, "the Irish had been converted by missionaries from the east, how came it to pass that the liturgy and every part of the Church service were written in Latin?"—and it seems to be generally assumed, from his use of that language, that St. Patrick was an emissary from Rome. No such consequence, however, follows; and this difficulty admits of the clearest solution. Bollandus, in the *Acta Sanctorum*, remarks thus (V. ii., p. 517, vii. Mar.) of the Latin tongue—"quâ SOLA omnes Romani quondam imperii nationes, etiam diu post ejus extinctionem, usi sunt, in conscribendis publicis rerum gestarum monumentis, seu sacris sive profanis"—or that it alone was in public use among the people of the Roman empire. *

That the church of Christ might the better have unity within itself, it was necessary that there should be general councils; thus only could it become truly Catholic, or, at least, preserved so. To these councils a common language was essential, and that language was, by the appointment of Providence, controlling the circumstances of the case, the Latin.

* This must have influenced Ireland, whose inhabitants had continual intercourse with those of Britain.

It is remarkable that the first revelations of God were confined to the Hebrew people, and made in the Hebrew tongue ; his next Scriptures were vouchsafed in the Greek, that they might be intelligible to all the chosen members of the infant Christian church ; and, when the Gospel was preached in all the *world*—was proclaimed in every part of the Roman empire—and one great Catholic or universal church of believers was formed within it, the Latin was appointed to serve, not only as the conventional ecclesiastical language of Christendom, but for a popular version of the Holy Writ; since it was at the time the most universal language spoken throughout that empire, and its immediate neighbourhood. It is taking a very narrow view of the subject, to suppose that Latin was so employed because it was peculiarly the language of Italy, and of the See of Rome ; for the true reason of its being so was, that it was the only efficient medium of communication between the members of the one universal church of Christ, of which Rome was then contented to be considered but a part ; and the best general channel for the written word of God. That it became of general use in Britain from this latter cause, appears from the following passage in Bede's Ecclesiastical History:—“This island,” Britain, “at this present, with five sundry languages, doth study and set forth the knowledge of the perfect truth ; that is, with the language of the English, the Britons, the Scots,” (or Irish,) “the Picts, and the Latins which, by the study of the Scriptures, is made common to all the rest.” The Latin tongue was, there-

fore, generally employed in the Greek, the Gallican, and the ancient British and Irish churches, because it was the universal language of the sacred books, and of the general councils of Christendom. That it was not chosen because it spoke the teachings of the Papal See, is manifest from this fact, that it was used by heretics, schismatics, and even in opposing Christianity itself by pagan infidels, as well as by the most orthodox in promoting it. It was also used by St. Colman, in his *opposition* to the Romish pretensions of Wilfred ; by the monks of Bangor, in resisting the encroachments of Austin ; and this not surely from deference to the See of Rome. It was used still earlier by St. Patrick, if the epistle to Coroticus be genuine, in addressing a heathen pirate, who would have scoffed at all idea of respect for any Christian pontiff, or for the language of his religion ; one who in fact did, as the letter relates it, laugh them to scorn—"cachinnos fecerunt de illis." The apostle, therefore, employed it in that epistle, as well as in his confession and canons, to be the more universally understood by the church ; but he tells us himself, that it was not his own tongue—"nam sermo et lingua nostra translata est in linguam alienam"—and, indeed, this is so clear from internal evidence, that St. Patrick himself thinks it necessary to apologise ; and Primate Ussher, with all his leaning to the Saint's connection with Rome, adduces the inferiority of his Latin to prove that he was not originally from thence. (Antiq., c. 17.) Although it is recorded by the Bollandists, (Acta Sanc. ub. sup. and Jocelyn, 118)

that he had the very best of masters in Gaul and Italy—"optimis in Galliâ et Italiâ magistris uso"—yet his Latin is clearly as far from being vernacular, as it is from deserving the character of classical.*

We are informed that the "*sermo et lingua nostra*," of Patrick, was the Irish; in this tongue he certainly composed his celebrated hymn; in it he is said to have written proverbs and epistles—and, doubtless, he spoke that language when he joined in the discourses from the Scriptures, that are noticed by St. Chrysostom, as being common in Ireland in the time of that Father. We may, perhaps, be excused for extending this digression so far; and for adding an interesting fact on this subject. It is related of St. Aidan, who was ignorant of the Saxon tongue, and who was brought over from Iona by Oswald, king of Northumberland, to promote the conversion of his subjects, that this missionary preached to them

* St. Patrick informs us that his father was a Decurio—"Ingenuus fui secundum carnem, Decurione patre nascor." This officer was not, as some suppose, of military rank; but the president of the municipal council, which, on the model of the Roman senate, governed the provincial cities of the empire. The office was very ancient, and merely civic; Villanueva (*Opusc. S. Patr.*) quotes authorities to show that it was sometimes holden by priests; it might well, therefore, have been filled by St. Patrick's father, Calphurnius, who was only a deacon. Patrick, whether he were born in Gaul or Britain, might thus have acquired a considerable knowledge of Latin. I think it very doubtful that his vernacular tongue was the Irish. Villanueva remarks thus (p. 15):—"In quatuor linguis, scilicet Brittanicâ, Ibernica, Gallicâ, et Latinâ, peritum fuisse; Græcâ etiam ex parte novisse, auctor est Jocelinus."

*

through the interpretation of the king himself, who had been educated in Ireland, and was as familiar with the language of that country and of St. Aidan as with his native Saxon.

Enough has been said to demonstrate, that our celebrated apostle had never any connexion with the Papal See ; we shall now proceed to show that

**IRELAND DID NOT RECEIVE THE GOSPEL FIRST
THROUGH ANY OTHER EMISSARY FROM ROME.**

It is asserted by Romanist writers—first, that our islands are indebted to a Pope for the introduction of Christianity, A.D. 156 ; and, secondly, to another Pope for the mission of Palladius to Ireland, to extirpate heresy, or to preside in her Church ;—and this either as its first bishop, or as a primate over others, who had been previously ordained at Rome. Of each of these in their order. Doctor Rock, compelled to admit the reception of Christianity into Ireland previously to A. D. 432, allows it in these terms (p. 20) : “ It is not, however, at all unlikely, that the nearness of Ireland to this country ” (England) “ brought some of the Irish to know the truths of the Gospel, through their intercourse with the believing Britons ; to whom such a blessing had been sent as early as the second age of the Church, from Rome itself, and from a Roman Pontiff, St. Eleutherius.” It is, indeed, recorded by Bede, that Lucius, a British prince, did in the year 156 send to that Pope, and invite him to plant the Gospel in Britain, and that his request was acceded to ; and also that

the new converts peaceably preserved the faith pure and entire to the time of Diocletian—"susceptam fidem usque ad tempora Diocletiani principis inviolatam integramque quieté in pace servabant," (Eccl. His. i., 4.) But the fact of this message is extremely doubtful, and we can scarcely suppose that it existed without the knowledge of Eusebius, the accurate ecclesiastical historian of those very times, who yet makes no allusion whatsoever to the circumstance. Although thus mentioned by Bede, it is, perhaps, only his hearsay repetition of a remote tradition, which was about 600 years old when he compiled his history; and at all events it is not to be extended beyond what his words will warrant. That there was a church in Britain in the fourth century is not to be denied, for she sent her bishops to the councils of Arles, A.D. 314; of Nice, A.D. 325; of Sardica, A.D. 347; and of Ariminum, 359; but that she did not spring from Rome, or look upon the Papal as a mother church, is clear from the fact, and also from the manner, of her resistance to the assumptions of the Papal emissary St. Austin, in the reign of Gregory I.

There is a letter said to have been addressed by Eleutherius, to the monarch Lucius, in these remarkable words—"You have lately, by Divine mercy, received the law and faith of Christ; you have with you in the kingdom both the New and Old Testament, whence, by the advice of your peers and council of your kingdom, you may select holy and blameless laws; which may be enacted and supported, not by

any foreign, but by your own authority, who are God's Vicar in your own kingdom, and represent his power to your people." This letter is quoted even in a legal argument, in the case of *Præmunire*, by Sir John Davies,* to prove the independence of the Church of Britain; and on this head he further adds that Pelagius, a monk of Bangor "about the year 400, being cited to Rome, refused to appear on the Pope's citation, affirming that Britain was neither in his diocese nor his province." All this may be mere legend; but the story, taken in any manner, affords no link of a connection between our island churches with Rome; and, whatever be the truth respecting this point, this passage in Bede's history must be restricted to the Church of the Britons, it has no relation to the Irish one of the Scots. The conjecture, therefore, beyond which Dr. Rock has not presumed to venture, and to which he *has* ventured unaccompanied by any good authority, must yield its verisimilitude to the weight of contrary evidence. In fine, had this papal mission had any connection with the early Irish Church, Bede, who brings its story down to the era of Diocletian, and leaves it there, would certainly have recorded the interesting fact—the triumphant one for the church to which he was so very zealously attached.

But, in truth, this is not the "infant church" to which Mr. Moore and the other historians allude, when they relate the maternal solicitude of Rome, in

* See his Reports. Dub., 1762, p. 245.

sending over Palladius to be the bishop of the believing Scots. "The language of history is *unequivocal* upon this point," says Dr. Rock (p. 18), "that the Irish owed their first bishop to Rome"—yet is the evidence of it so full of inconsistency and contradiction, and, therefore, so equivocal, that we must dwell on it at some length, in order, if possible, to eviscerate the truth. It will exhibit a useful specimen of the uncertainty in which the question of the origin of our Primitive Church is involved—the contradiction with which it abounds—and the distortion of documents made to support pre-conceived systems concerning it. Thus it will serve as a warning against the too ready use and reception of dogmatical assertion; induce the public to seek for proofs; and, relying on the best evidences on these difficult points, to reject all that is spurious, and to deliberate concerning whatever is doubtful.

The assertion, then, "that Ireland owed her first bishop to a Roman pontiff," is grounded on these words of Bede, (Eccl. Hist. I. c. 13) who repeats the account from the chronicle of Prosper, a contemporary annalist; he is speaking of the reign of Theodosius the younger—"Cujus anno imperii octavo, Palladius, ad Scotos in Christum credentes, a pontifice Romanæ ecclesiæ Celestino, primus mittitur episcopus"—Palladius, was sent by Celestine, the Roman Pontiff, the first bishop, to the Scots believing in Christ.—But this authority for the origin of the Irish Church has given rise to two theories respecting its character, which are essentially at variance with each other.

It was needful to all the maintainers of a certain system, that Roman emissaries should be considered as the founders of the orthodox Irish church; but, as this testimony of its existence when Palladius arrived here stood written, an attempt was made, at an early period, by some of them, to vitiate certain copies of the record, and, accordingly, they were made to run thus—“Ad Scotos in Christum credentes, sed non recte, ordinatur a Papá Celestino Palladius, &c.” “To the Scots believing in Christ, but *not rightly*, was Palladius commissioned.” From this it was to be deduced, that the creed of the primitive Irish Christians was heretical, and that it was the object of this first missionary of the Pope to correct it. This opinion has doubtless received the high sanction of Doctor O’Conor, who asserts (Proleg., i. 74), “that we owe it chiefly to the errors and genius of Celestius, the pupil of Pelagius, that Saints Palladius and Patrick were sent into Ireland, that they should recall to the right faith the Scots believing in Christ, *but not rightly*, as Prosper testifies;” while Mr. Moore goes a step further, and alleges that Pelagius was an Irishman—a monk of the monastery of Bangor, or Banchor, near Carrickfergus. The latter historian, by the way, is thus guilty of an anachronism, extraordinary in so intelligent a writer; for this abbey was founded A.D. 559 by Comgal*; about a century and a half after the death of Pelagius, who

* Uss. Ind. Chron., ad ann., and Uls. ann., 518, 601, and 602.

flourished before St. Patrick, and who is generally recorded to have been a Briton—a monk of the monastery of Bangor in Wales. The reading, however, of *sed non recté* is almost universally repudiated, and is not so much as noticed by Doctor Rock. The first of these theories, then, must be abandoned; the more especially as it is in direct contradiction to the testimony of St. Columbanus, who declares, in a celebrated passage in his letter to Pope Boniface IV.—which is much relied on by the Doctor for other matters, and to which I shall presently advert—that no Heretic, Jew, or Schismatic had ever been in the Irish Church.* I should observe, however, that this theory has the support of Sir William Betham.



* A second reading of this celebrated passage, afforded us by Nennius (*Hist. Britonum*), is as follows—“*Missus est Palladius Episcopus, primitus, a Celestino episcopo et papà Romæ, ad Scotos in Christum convertendos*”—Palladius was sent from the first, to convert the Scots to Christ—implying that there was no infant church as yet formed in the island. This version seems to be now universally rejected; and yet this mode of relating the fact appears to have been received by some of our best annalists, where they write thus—*Palladius ad Scotos, a Celestino urbis Romæ Episcopo, ordinatur episcopus; Actio et Valeriano coss. primus mittitur in Hiberniam, ut Christum credere potuissent, anno Theodosii viii.*” And the ancient chronicle of Prosper itself seems elsewhere to give it farther warrant, where it asserts, in allusion to the expelling of Pelagianism from England—“*Ordinato Scotis episcopo, dum Romanam insulam studit servare Christianam, fecit etiam barbaram Christianam*”—as if the objects of the mission were pagans and not believers. See here the *Annals of Ulster*, and of *Innisfallen*.

Another version is remarkable, I take it from Ussher's *Primordia*, p. 999, where he informs us, that the word “*primus*” does not occur in “*in Chronico integriore*”—in the most authentic copy of Prosper's chronicle.

But, following Ussher and the best Romanist authorities, in receiving as most correct the reading, that Palladius was sent to the Scots, or Irish, believing in Christ, as their FIRST bishop, I shall proceed to explain the double aspect which it is made to assume, by two different significations that are given to the term “*primus*,” or first—both of them founded on the supposition of a previously existing Church, and both of them relied on to prove it.

This word is considered by some to bear a reference to time, as if Palladius were the first apostle of the Irish; implying that St. Patrick was the second person sent thither in that character, and both of them from the Romish See. Thus Tirechan, in his life of that saint, alleges that (Uss. Prim. 799), “Palladius Episcopus *primus* mittitur, qui Patricius alio nomine appellabatur; deinde Patricius secundus a Celestino Papâ mittitur, cui Hibernia tota credidit.” This view is approved by Dr. O’Conor, and seems to have been in the mind of Dr. Lanigan, when he conjectured that “St. Patrick was ordained second in the mission, though not consecrated bishop at the same

I am well convinced of the truth of the following observation of Dr. Ledwich, and it may serve in some degree to account for this manner of noticing the event by Prosper and the annalists, (page 78, ed., 1803;)—“the uniform language of Romish writers, in every age, was to call the people barbarians, and that nation pagan, which did not implicitly yield to their lust of wealth and power.” He quotes the instances of Austin’s mission to Britain by Greg. I., to teach the gospel, “as if it never before had there been heard; whereas he met seven British bishops who nobly opposed him”—and also that of the authority given by Adrian to Henry II., to plant the faith in Ireland, when it had been evangelized for 800 years.

time with Palladius." But all the conclusions that are drawn from this meaning of the word "*primus*," appear to be illogical and unwarranted: yet do they suggest the possibility, that the term *Patricius* was at first applied, like that of *Patriarch*, to designate an ecclesiastical officer; and to have been successively conferred on Palladius and St. Patrick, as heads of the Irish Church.* This conjecture, however, if admitted, would amount to a concession respecting the Roman mission of Patrick, which cannot be made upon such slight grounds as the authority of biographers, whose fabricated or interpolated, and at least, heresay accounts can none of them be entirely relied on.

The second view taken of the meaning of the word *primus*, as it is used by Bede, is, that it relates to rank, and not to order of time. Palladius is therefore alleged, by some writers, to have been sent over by the Pope as Primate of the infant Church; and, as this appointment pre-supposes the existence of bishops, these are accordingly said to have been previously appointed by the Romish Pontiff—it is upon this important assumption that I now desire especially to dwell.

"The earliest native traditions of Christianity in Ireland link that country to papal Rome," is the

* O'Halloran (vol. ii. p. 16), asserts, that at the Synod of St. Patrick, holden at Cashel, at which King Aongus presided, it was decreed—"That St. Albe should rank as second Patrick, and Patron and Archbishop of Munster; and that St. Declan should be called the Patrick of the Deasies, and their chief bishop." This is equally a fabrication with the rest of the story of the four bishops.

bold assertion of Dr. Rock (p. 21), and he grounds it upon this pre-existing episcopacy, over which it is thus alleged that St. Patrick was sent from Rome to preside. I shall follow him in his account of the matter.

He commences with some passages from Ussher's *Primordia*, which give an account of these bishops—the original Latin is presented in a note ; but one* of the Primate's expressions, repeated in five instances, is uniformly omitted in the translation that is used in the text, and which readers will look to alone. This omission will doubtless give to many the impression, that Ussher has presented an historical account—instead of merely repeating the hearsay of a tradition, upon the probable truth of which he manifestly avoids giving any decided opinion—and that he has, therefore, indorsed its legends with his assent. Having thus secured a favourable hearing, Doctor Rock proceeds in these words:—"From the annals of Innisfallen we gather, that A. D. 402, Kiaran and Declan came from Rome, bishops, to announce the faith in Ireiand—412, Ailbe of Emly came from Rome, a bishop, to announce the faith in Ireland—424, Ibar Invarensis came from Rome, a bishop to Ireland"—we are not told what detained Ailbe so long at Rome, where he must have remained a bishop fifteen years, if it be true that he was, according to the account of his life, consecrated in 397, and did not arrive in Ireland until 412.

* This meaning is conveyed by the use of the words "*dicitur*," "*fertur*," and "*perhibetur*;" all of which may be translated thus—"it is said."

These details, however, of tradition, and of comparatively modern history, are not only contradictory in themselves, but are opposed to other historical documents; for we find, on consulting the *Ulster Annals*, the death of Ibar recorded A.D. 500, and of Ailbe, 533;—they could not, therefore, have been consecrated bishops in the years 402 and 412.—Archbishop Ussher in his *Index* seems to give 449 (17 years after the alleged arrival of St. Patrick), as the date of their episcopal ordination. With respect to Kiaran and Declan, their biographers fix the year of their respective deaths at A.D. 549; and, as if determined to reconcile all differences of opinion by the surrender of all probability, M. Geoghegan states, that Kiaran was born in the year 352, and died in 548—(vol. i., 161 and 163). No wonder, then, that Mr. Moore, agreeing with Dr. Lanigan, rejects this figment altogether; and considers all these individuals to have been disciples, and not precursors of St. Patrick. The latter historian says, that Declan might have been thirty years of age in 484.

The legends proceed to state, that the four saints, Kiaran, Ailbe, Declan, and Ibar, founded respectively the ancient sees of Saiger in Ossory, Emly, Ardmore in Waterford, and Beg Erin, or Little Erin, in an island off the coast of Wexford—that Kiaran immediately admitted the authority which St. Patrick assumed as Primate; that Ailbe and Declan acquiesced in it, although not at once; but that Ibar rejected it altogether—a fact, by the

way, which exhibits the independence of this pre-existing Church, if it ever existed at all, and shows how little it heeded the interferences of Rome. The story goes on further to relate, that St. Patrick, with the co-operation of Aongus, the king of Munster, established Ailbe in Emly, as metropolitan or archbishop of that province. But this is an account, which is scarcely consistent with the admitted facts, that the title of archbishop was not introduced into Ireland for four centuries after this event; and that, accompanied with a pall, which is essential to that dignity in the Romish Church, it was not in use here till the year 1151: or with that given by St. Bernard, that the Irish Primate, Celsus, but a few years before that date, first raised the see of Cashel, and not Emly, to the metropolitan and archiepiscopal dignity in the province of Munster—contradictions which have not escaped the notice of Dr. Lanigan.

I have dwelt very much on these legends, or traditions, but not more than truth requires. Too long have candid inquirers been deceived by the boldness of deductions illogically made from unestablished premises, and yet unblushingly presented as demonstrated facts—and this upon the most important of subjects. By such as these the credulity of Ussher himself* was greatly imposed upon; and most moderns have so blindly followed in his wake, that they have not hitherto dared sufficiently to discredit these stories, although they are deficient in consistency, are

* It is very much to be regretted, that the high authority

contradictory to better authenticated history, and afford materials for differences of opinion the most opposite, between the most intelligent and learned. Thus, while many very fully admit of the account of an episcopal Romanist Church existing at the arrival of Palladius, as many deny it altogether; some allow of this infant Church, but without its bishops; others will have it to be heretical—and allege, that to one or other of those two curses, heresy or schism, we are indebted for the blessings of a Roman mission; Mr. Moore's infant Church is Pelagian, but he rejects the four bishops; Dr. O'Connor's is Pelagian also, but he retains them; while Dr. Lanigan denies both that heresy, and this hierarchy. The most modern writers that make mention of the story of the four bishops, Dr. Rock and Mr. Todd, receive it implicitly in all

of Ussher cannot be brought to bear with sufficient decision on the questions of this mission of Palladius and St. Patrick, and this early episcopal Church. Of the first of these he says—"Quâ ratione primus Episcopus dici potuerit Palladius, si Scotos ante eum alios fidei doctores habuisse admisimus?" forgetting that, although he were the first bishop, yet there might have been previous teachers. He then determines respecting him thus—"Vel duorum episcoporum quos Papa Celestinus Scotis miserit, fuisse illum primum (*si quidem* post eum ad eosdem missus ab illo est Patricius), vel primum et primæ sedis episcopum ordinatum." To this latter alternative he leans; but puts forth the theory of the ante-Patrician episcopacy principally on authorities, such as the lives of Kieran and Declan and others, which cannot properly be relied on. This indecision has infected the intelligent Bishop of St. Asaph with cowardice, and made him to declare (Lloyd, on Church Government, c. iv. s. 2)—"I dare not wholly reject those Irish legends of Kieran," &c.; for which timidity Dr. Ledwich very properly remonstrates with his lordship—(Antiq. p. 57.)

its fullness; the latter, in his "Church of St. Patrick," does not hesitate to declare, in 1844, "that every ancient document connected with Irish church history agrees with the legends in asserting this fact;" but in a second work, put forth in the succeeding year—his "History of the Irish Church"—he calls the four bishops, "plain and zealous ascetics;" and says, "but the state of the Church for a long time was not such as to give them either clergy to govern, or dioceses to take charge of." In this his altered judgment I partly concur, and I entirely acquiesce in the matured opinion of Doctor Lanigan upon the subject. He asserts that there is "no foundation for the high authority assigned to the legends, nor for there having been bishops as early as mentioned in them." These *fables*, he says, occur in the lives of those saints, tracts abounding with anachronisms and contradictions; while the old Irish annals, and the most correct lives of St. Patrick, are *in direct opposition* to them. (vol. i. 22, &c.) It is of importance to add, that the annals of Innisfallen, relied on by Dr. Rock, are a new publication of the first part; published, it is true, by Dr. O'Connor, but with this cautionary note, copied from the autograph of his father, the intelligent C. O'Connor of Ballynegar—*Scatet mendis plurimis, in rebus chronologicis et historicis; et demonstrationes plurimæ istius rei extant hodié in manibus Caroli O'Connor, A.D., 1775.*"—It abounds in errors, both "in chronological and historical matters."

It is very necessary, therefore, for us to examine

more into the evidences from which we are to form our judgments, and to decide according to their just and reasonable bearing. With respect, then, to the passage which we have quoted from Prosper and from Bede, it is sufficient at present to let it speak simply to common sense, and solely in its obvious meanings, as a testimony that Christianity existed in Ireland before the arrival of St. Patrick, and that Palladius was commissioned thither from Rome; but we cannot admit that he was thus sent to preside over a pre-existing *Roman* hierarchy, or church.

It seems to be generally assumed, that St. Columbanus has asserted the exclusively Roman origin of the Irish church, in his remarkable letter to Pope Boniface IV. His words are—"We are the scholars of SS. Peter and Paul, and of all disciples subscribing by the Holy Ghost the divine canon; we are all Irish inhabitants of the furthestmost part of the world, receiving nothing beyond the evangelic and apostolic doctrine. None of us has been a heretic, none a Jew, none a schismatic; but the faith, just as it was at first delivered by you, the successors to wit of the holy apostles, is held unshaken." (See this translation in Doctor Rock's letter to Lord John Manners, p. 46.) I shall return to the consideration of this most important epistle, in connection with the inquiry into the independence of our national church; and shall here only observe of this passage, that the writer, who addressed it to the Pope on the occasion of the celebrated question of the three chapters, when the Irish bishops unanimously dis-

sented from the Church of Rome, is defending his church from the accusation of schism, which was then brought against it for its independent conduct. Of these bishops it is said, that "they departed from her," Rome, "and clave to the rest of the schismatics, animated with that vain confidence, that they did stand for the *Catholic* faith," &c. St. Columbanus is warm in supporting the truth, that the Catholic faith is something more than the particular one of Rome, although the contrary doctrine was just then fast gaining ground: that from this truly Catholic faith they were not schismatics, as it was alleged, but held "unshaken" that faith,—"*nothing beyond the evangelic and apostolic doctrine,*" but "*just as it was delivered by you, the successors of the holy apostles;*"—in receiving which, he says, "*we are the scholars of SS. Peter and Paul, and of all disciples subscribing by the Holy Ghost the divine canon;*" that is, we are the scholars of ALL who teach the word of God in truth—of all evangelical and apostolical preachers of the *Catholic* Church. To this really universal authority the saint more particularly alluded, by his saying, "*we are all Irish, inhabitants of the furthestmost part of the world*"—words which were studiously introduced to remind the Pope, in like manner as he had hinted to Pope Gregory I. in a former letter, of the second canon of the council of Constantinople; in which it was decreed, "*that the churches without the Roman empire are to be administered according to the traditional customs of their fathers;*" and to imply, that

the Irish church, which was without that empire, could not, as an independent one, be considered as schismatic from any other subordinate portion of the Catholic Church, or as having separated from the Catholic faith, because she happened to differ from Rome.

All this will appear more clear by a further explanation of this very material fact, that the early Irish church, as it was without the Roman empire, was not only administered according to its own traditions, but had its peculiar head—its peculiar city apostolic—its peculiar litany, discipline, and ceremonies. Thus, St. Patrick is called, in the Manuscript of Bobbio, “Magister Scotorum;”^{*} Armagh is denominated, in the Book of Armagh, “the apostolic city;” and the particular office of the Irish, “cursus Scotorum.” Archbishop Ussher refers to this†—“So,” he adds, “in a certain hymn, supposed to be written by Secundinus (St. Seachlin), A.D., 448, St. Patrick is thus commended—‘He is constant in the fear of God, and immovable in the faith; upon whom the church is builded, as upon Peter; whose apostleship, also, he hath obtained from God, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against him.’”

Archbishop Ussher, in the same passage, quotes thus from Claudius, a celebrated Irish divine of the ninth century—“The foundation of the church was

^{*} Sir W. Betham’s Researches, p. 82.

† Reliq. of Ant. Irish, p. 74. In the catalogue of saints, the first order are said to have had *one head*—Patrick.

laid not only on St. Peter, but St. John." These words are remarkable, and becoming a teacher of our primitive faith. They lead us naturally to the consideration of its commencement ; and we shall now proceed to the proof that

THE IRISH CHURCH IS OF EASTERN ORIGIN.

Rome is confidently put forth, and almost universally admitted as the mother church of Ireland ; whereas it is certain, that she has usurped upon the just rights of the eastern disciples of St. John. I shall proceed to establish the truth of this unpopular assertion, and commence by transcribing an interesting portion of history from the venerable Bede, abridged as much as its importance will admit ; yet, as it not only serves to decide the point that was last under consideration, but also to show through what channel the religion of the gospel was introduced into Ireland ; and, as it bears materially upon almost every essential point that is now in controversy on the subject of the primitive character of our national church, I must exhibit it at some length, and introduce it with an earnest appeal to the particular attention of the reader.

We meet with, in the third book of the Ecclesiastical History of this ancient writer, the account of that celebrated synod holden at Whitby, in Yorkshire, A.D., 664, to which I have already alluded I shall extract from it, in the words of his translator,* the Jesuit Thomas Stapleton. There was much

* Ed. St. Omer's, 12mo., A.D., 1622.

controversy in Christendom about the proper time for the observance of Easter, which was kept by such different rules in the Irish and Romish churches, that "it happened oftentimes, that in one yeare two Easters were kepte; and that the kinge," Oswin of Northumberland, who was educated in Ireland, "finishing his fast, and solemnizing the feaste of Easter, the Queene," who was a follower of the Romish custom, "with her company, were still fasting and kept Palme Sunday." "The subject," says Bede, "being much talked of, they agreed on both sides that, in the monasterie of Stranshalch," or Whitby, "where that devout and virtuous woman Hilda was abbesse, a synod should be kept, for the deciding of the question, and others then in controversy. To this synod came both the kinges, Oswin the father, and Alcfrid the sonne. With King Oswin stode Bishop Colman, with his clergy of Scotland; Hilda, also, the abbesse, with her company, among whom was Cedda, that reverend bishop lately consecrated of the Scottes. For the other opinion, which King Alcfrid followed, Agilbert the bishop stode, with Agatha and Wilfrid, priestes; Jacobus also, and Romanus, two other learned men, stode of that side." "This Wilfrid," we are previously told, "for better instruction and lerninge's sake had travailed to Rome; and lived also a longe time with Dalphinus, the Archbishop of Lyons in France."

"First, then, Kinge Oswin, (premising that it behoved those which served one God to keep one order

and rule in serving him), commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what his observation was, whence he received it, and whom he followed therein. The bishop answered and said, ‘The Easter which I observe I have received of my forefathers, of whom I was sent hither bishop; who, all being virtuous and godly men, have after the same manner observed it. And this observation, that you may not thinke it a light matter or easily to be rejected, is the selfsame which St. John the Evangelist, the disciple whom Jesus specially loved, with all the churches under him, observed.’ The king then called for Agilbert’s answer, who referred to Wilfrid, as he did not speak the English tongue. Then Wilfrid (the kinge commanding him) spake in this wise:—‘The Easter which we observe we have sene in like manner to have bene observed at Rome, where the blessed apostles, Peter and Paule, lived and preached, suffered and are buried. This manner we have sene to be observed in all Italy and France—this manner we know to be observed in Afrike, in Asia, in Ægypt, in Greece, and throughout all nations and tounge of all the world where the Church of Christ taketh place, after the selfesame order and time; beside only these fewe, and other of the like obstinacy, the Pictes I mean and the Britons, with whom these men, from the two fardermost islands of the ocean sea (and yet not all that neither), do fondly contend against the whole world.’ Here Colmanus the bishop interrupted him and said:—‘I marvail much you terme our doing a fond contention, wherein we follow the example of

so worthy an apostle, who only leaned upon our Lord's brest, and whose life and behaviour all the worlde accompteth to have bene most wise and discrete.' Unto whom Wilfrid answered and said— 'God forbid that we should charge St. John with fondnesse, or lacke of wit.'" He then enters into a long and learned discussion of the practice of St. John and of St. Peter. To this Colman replied thus:—"Is it to be thought that our most Reverend Father Columba and his successors, virtuous and godly men, who kept their Easter after the same manner, ether beleved or lived contrary to Holy Scripture, and especially their holinesse being such, that God hath confirmed it with miracles? Truly, as I doubt not but they were holy men, so I will not feare to follow alwaies their lives, manners, and trade of discipline.' 'In good soth,' quoth Wilfrid, 'as touching your father Columba, and those which followed him, whose holy steppes you pretend to follow as the which have bene confirmed by miracles, to this I may answer that, in the day of judgment, whereas many shall saie unto Christ that they have prophecied, cast out divells, and wrought miracles in his name, our Lord will answer, that he knoweth them not. But God forbid that I should so judge of your fathers; for it is our duty of such as we knowe not to deeme the best. Therefore I deeme not but they were men of God, and acceptable in his sight, who loved God, though in rude simplicitie, yet with a godly intention. Neither do I thinke that the manner of their observation coul'

be much prejudicial against them, as long as *they had yet received no instructions to the contrary*; but I rather verely suppose, seing such commandements of God as they knew they willingly followed, they would also have conformed themselves to the Catholike judgment, *if they had bene so informed*. But now, sir, you and your companions, if, *hearing the decrees* of the Apostolike See, or rather of the Universal Church, and that also confirmed in Holy Write, you follow not the same—you offend and sinne herein undoubtedly. For, though your fathers were holy men, could yet those fewe, of one so small corner of the uttermost island of the earth, prejudice the whole Church of Christ dispersed throughout the universall worlde? And, if your father Columba, (yea, and our father, if he were the true servant of Christ), were holie and mighty in miracles; yet can he not by any meanes be preferred before the most pious of the apostles, to whom our Lorde said—‘Thou art Peter, and uppon this rocke I will builde my church, and hell gates shall never prevaile against her; and to thee I will give the keyes of the kingdom of heaven.’ ”

“Then, when Wilfrid had concluded, the kinge said unto Bishop Colman—‘Were these things, indede, spoken to Peter of our Lord?’ To whom the bishop answered ‘Yes.’ ‘Can you, then,’ (said the kinge) ‘geve evidence of so special authority geven to your father Columba?’ The bishop answering ‘no,’ the kinge spake unto both parties and said—‘Agree ye both in this, without any controversy, that these

words were principally spoken unto Peter, and that unto him the keyes of the kingdome of heaven were given?' When both had answered 'yea,' the kinge concluded, and said—'Then say I unto you, that I will not gainsay such a porter as this is; but, as farre as I knowe and am able, I will covete in all pointes to obey his ordinances; lest, perhaps, when I come to the dores of the kingdome of heaven, I finde none to open unto me, having his displeasure which is so clerely proved to beare the keyes through.' Thus when the kinge had said, all that sate and stode by, of all sorts and degrees, abandoning their former imperfectnesse, conformed themselves to the better instructions which they now learned."

The history further informs us that Colman, perceiving his doctrine to be rejected and his sect despised, taking with him those who were willing to follow him—that is, such as would not receive the Catholic Easter and the coronal tonsure—(*tonsuram coronæ, nam de hoc questio non minima erat*)—returned back into Scotland, resigning his see of Lindisfarne.

Where, it may here be demanded, is there exhibited, in this remarkable passage of unimpeachable history, any "fondness of the early Irish Church for her Roman mother, cherished," as has been asserted by Dr. Rock, "in her authentic traditions?" Truly, the direct contrary appears; and that she neither knew nor acknowledged Rome as such, that she rejected its interference with singular impatience, and that she warmly and even blindly clung to those traditions,

because they told of her “having, even from the very beginning, received her first instructions, and her first and authorized anointed teachers,” not through Rome, but the Gallic Churches—not from the successors of St. Peter, but the disciples of St. John. This assertion of her origin, most unequivocally advanced in the course of the discussion which I have just now detailed, and not denied by the advocate for Rome, should settle the question, were existing testimony properly weighed in considering it ; and it is rendered even stronger, by the expressions that are made use of by two of the biographers of Wilfred, both of them Roman Catholics, in presenting the argument of St. Colman. One of these, (Æddi or Stephanus,) makes his defence of this traditional manner of observing Easter to be still more distinctly connected with St. John, thus—“we with the same confidence celebrate the same, as his disciples and others did.” The other, (Fridegodus,) records the words of Colman, in the following verses :—

“ Nos seriem patriam, non frivola scripta tenemus,
 , Discipulo Eusebii Polycarpo dante Johannis.”

“ We abide by the usage of our country, not frivolous writings, such as was given by Polycarp, the disciple of St. John.”

The fact, then, of her Eastern origin is distinctly declared and recorded, at the very commencement of the eighth century, and by a Romanist writer of the very highest authority in himself, increased by the strong circumstance that it testifies against the

bias of his own predilections. There is nothing near so ancient, so authentic, so distinct to support the other theory ; and we might safely, one would imagine, rest our case with perfect confidence upon this proof alone, were it not that we have experienced that the testimony from Bede of this Synod has been too much put aside ; and that, like the truth of a plain and honest witness, who has been brow-beaten by an advocate well skilled in making the worse appear the better reason, it has failed of its just effect, and requires corroboration and support. This, indeed, we are enabled most amply to afford it ; but we must previously dwell at some length upon this interesting and much-slighted passage, for it affords us many other important deductions.

It will be necessary to explain more fully the principal subject of this discussion ; for it has not, even from the beginning, been so clearly understood, as to prevent writers from falling into error respecting it. There were, in ancient times, three modes of fixing the day upon which the feast of Easter should be celebrated ; it was holden by some, and at a very early period, on the fourteenth day of the first moon after the vernal equinox, whether that day were Sunday, or any other day of the week. This erroneous method was fallen into by St. Polycarp, the celebrated martyr and disciple of St. John, the Christians of Asia Minor, and also by the Jews ; and it was in defence of it, that this eminent person, in the year 100, visited Anicetus Bishop of Rome, who main-

tained a different mode. The Christians of this system were styled Quarto-decimans. It is however not a little remarkable that, notwithstanding the argument of Colman, the ancient British and Irish churches were not the followers of Polycarp in this matter. The venerable Bede, in the very same book that records the discussion at Whitby, informs us, that they kept Easter, "not as some falsely think" (so early had mistaken notions with respect to the facts crept in) "on the fourteenth moon with the Jews, but upon the Lord's day between the fourteenth and twentieth moon." (Ecc. Hist. iii. 17.) And again, (i. 4) "not always on the fourteenth moon with the Jews, as some have imagined, but on the Lord's day—not, however, in the right week, did the monks of Iona celebrate Easter." If, therefore, St. Colman meant to say that, holding the quarto-deciman method, his church agreed with Polycarp, he was in error; and indeed the argument of Wilfred throughout demonstrates, that he did not well understand the point he contended for. This does appear strange; but it is yet more surprising that even Ussher, in his "Religion of the Ancient Irish," misapplies this name—and Dr. Ledwich, with all his research and intelligence, and with these facts before him, asserts that, in the observation of Easter, Columba was a quarto-deciman; yet adding, that "he left in charge to his religious at Hy, to keep it from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon, which they did to the year 716."

There were two other times for celebrating this

feast, both of which differed from the quarto-deciman in this, that they restricted it to the Lord's day. The first was that of Columba and Iona, of the British and Irish churches, above recorded; they kept it on the fourteenth of the moon, if a Sunday; and, if not, on any day of the moon to the twentieth that might happen to be Sunday: and, in making their computation of the proper time, they followed a cycle of Sulpicius Severus, of 84 years. This was the method of the Gallican church; and, previously to the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, was in general use. It was, therefore, that of Rome, until altered by that Council; but after it, the Romans (Uss. Relig. &c. p. 93) kept Easter on the Sunday between the fifteenth and twenty-first days of the moon after the twenty-first of March; and, in reckoning the age of the moon, they followed the cycle of 84 years to the middle of the sixth century, (Dr. Rock's letter, App. xiv.) when they adopted the Alexandrian cycle of 19 years—"from whence our golden number had its original." This is the third method of keeping and computing the time for the celebration of Easter, and is the manner now every where observed.

At the time, therefore, that St. Patrick arrived in Ireland, A. D. 432, the Romans kept their Easter from the fifteenth to the twenty-first, inclusive; the Irish church celebrated theirs from the fourteenth to the twentieth, and they both of them followed the same cycle. How, then, can that assertion be reconciled with the record, where, alluding to the mode of tonsure, which he says was "mixed up throughout

with the Paschal question," Mr. Moore observes, that on the part of the Irish, the real motive for clinging so fondly to their old custom was, that "it had been introduced among them, *with ALL their other ecclesiastical rules and usages*, by St. Patrick" ? (i. 283-4). And again, that "he introduced the same method of paschal computation, namely, by the cycle of 84 years, which was then practised at Rome" (vol. i. p. 262.) Thus it is, that the rigid adherence to a mistaken postulate in our Church History, that St. Patrick was an emissary from the Romish See, compels the most intelligent to erroneous and contrary conclusions. It is clear that he did not introduce the use of the day, and that the Irish did not adopt his cycle is likewise manifest, from the letter that was written to the Abbot of Iona on this particular subject, by St. Cumman. In this the writer asserts, that the Easter of Iona and its cycle were contrary to all others; and, among them, "*primum illum*," (such are his words) "*quem S. Patricius Papa noster tulit et fecit*, "that first one which St. Patrick our Papa, brought in and made." There was, therefore, no such tenacious abiding of the Irish by the teachings of St. Patrick ? Dr. Lanigan, who is in general more ingenuous than others of his persuasion, where he writes of this Saint, (v. ii. 379, and ch. xv. 3, 4) asserts "that there is no doubt that the whole Paschal system was introduced into Ireland by St. Patrick"—he does not say *from Rome*. And again, "our Apostle merely delivered it to the Irish churches, according as he had found it followed in some parts of Gaul." His conjecture is indeed

plausible, because that Sulpicius Severus, the teacher of the Irish cycle of 84 years, was the biographer of his uncle, St. Martin of Tours; but still it fails before the testimony of Cummián. Dr. Lanigan is, therefore, tempted to silence that testimony by the vague allegation, that St. Cummián gives no proof of what he says; but how can we reason at all, if we are to get rid of such evidence, so accredited and so ancient, by objections thus futile and gratuitous?

Having already made use of this important passage of history to disprove the alleged connection between these early churches, I shall proceed with some observations to which it gives rise. It is, in the first place, remarkable, that the Irish church was not represented at the Council of Nice; that of Britain was, by the attendance of several of its bishops—yet that was one of the general Councils. This arose from the independence of the church of Ireland; which, not being within the limits of the Roman empire, was, according to the 2nd canon of the Council of Constantinople, “to be administered according to the traditionary customs of its fathers.”

In the next place it is to be observed, that the canons of Nice were not transmitted to the Irish clergy; neither were those decrees of the sixth century, which changed the Paschal cycle at Rome. These facts are manifest from the speech of Wilfrid. It is also distinctly said by Bede, of the Irish, that “they followed dubious cycles in the time of keeping the great festivals; for, being situated far beyond the world”—the actual limits of the Roman empire—“no

one had furnished them with the synodal decrees for the Paschal observance." Now this also shows what was the acknowledged position of the Irish church, and that it was such as is expressed in the canon alluded to ; and also, while it exhibits her practical independence, it demonstrates that not until the year 664 did the Apostolic See intrude its authority to control her liberties, by denouncing that, were she to continue in her disobedience, she would "undoubtedly sin and offend."

In the third place, while it is indisputably certain that St. Patrick had interfered in the matter, with his counsel and example, it is also clear that, so far from this counsel being imparted with the high authority which would secure implicit obedience, it did not possess that unmixed influence which might induce general attention ; for the northern Scots, and those of Iona, Columba, Columbanus, Aidan, Finan, Colman, and others, rejected his cycle whatever it was ; and abided by their traditionary practices, although they were in themselves erroneous. Even with Cummian and the southern, it was not the authority of Patrick or of Rome which made them change their custom ; for it was not until several years after his death, and agreeably with the exhortation, and not the command of Pope Honorius, that they sent their deputation to Rome, as the "head of cities,"* to see how

* The terms made use of by Cummian, with reference to Rome, are highly respectful, nay, deferential—she is styled the "head of cities," and consulted as a mother by her sons : but there is no hint at her exclusive supremacy ; and the Apostolic See is distinctly said to be those of Jerusalem,

these things were considered by the Christian world ; and that, in consequence of their report that the Roman practice was that of Christendom, and of the conviction that it was reasonable, they adopted it ; as free members of an entirely independent church. Such is the tenor of this interesting letter of Cumman.

We cannot but be surprised that a person of such eminence as St. Colman, the great leading advocate of the Scottish cause in this debate, should have been so much mistaken in the point of history upon which he relied—so erroneous in his reasoning while maintaining it—so pertinacious in his opinion, when refuted ; and some may be even tempted to maintain, that these his failings tend to weaken, if not to neutralise, the effect of his other assertions. But it appears to me, that the more unreasonable, the more angry, the more obstinate the Irish party were, so much the more they manifested independence of Rome, jealousy of her interference, and abhorrence of that encroachment, which was now being attempted for the first time by her acute and judicious agent. Indeed Primate Ussher seems to consider it in this light, when he says (ch. viii.) that his countrymen “were so far from submitting themselves to whatsoever should proceed from Rome, they oftentimes stood out against it, when they had little cause so to do.” The irritation and pertinacity was doubtless excessive, so as to be pregnant with proof, that some other hated innovations were greatly dreaded. Not only did Colman at once resign his See of Lin-Rome, Alexandria and Antioch united—See his letter in Ussher’s Sylloge.

disfarne, and return homewards with the disgusted monks of his party, but some of the Irish abided long by their national practice ; and it was not until A. D. 716, that the island of Iona was persuaded to correct it, through the instrumentality of Ecgbert, an English monk. We are even told, in the life of St. Chrysostom,* that “certain clergymen,” *τινες κληρικοι*, “who dwelt in the *isles* of the ocean,” repaired from the utmost borders of the habitable world to Constantinople, between the years 842 and 847, when Methudius was Patriarch there, to inquire “of certain ecclesiastical traditions, and the perfect and “exact computation of Easter.” These islanders were, doubtless, from Wales, and from Ireland, for the plural term *isles* is used in the account.”

To return to the proofs of the Eastern origin of the Irish Church.

Mr. Moore, in his history, (vol. i, p. 297,) acknowledges the existence of “traces of connection, through Greek and Asiatic missionaries, with the east;” but he considers them not to be sufficiently numerous, “to prove more than a casual and occasional intercourse with these regions.” They are, however, very far more numerous, and much better proved indeed, than the instances which have been advanced of a similar intercourse with Rome, in the same remote period of time ; and some of them exhibit, by abiding circumstances, a connection that was not merely casual or occasional. We have, besides the traces already alluded to in the argument of Colman, those that are recorded by Bede, in his account of

* See his Works, Ed. Sav. Tom. viii p. 32.

the proffered compromise of St. Austin to the British monks of Bangor. "If," said he, "you would agree with Rome in the times of Easter, and the ministry of baptism, according to the Roman church, all your other ceremonies, rites, fashions, and customs, *though they be contrary to ours*, yet we will willingly suffer them." Here is a covering testimony to the anti-papal discipline of the Irish church, which it is known assimilated with that of the Britons. Among these *other* ceremonies, &c., *all* of them contrary to Roman custom, there are two that I shall especially mention as peculiarly Eastern—the mode of tonsure, and the liturgy;—upon the latter of these I shall somewhat enlarge.

"The liturgy," says Dr. Lanigan,* "of the old Scots or Irish, was brought into Ireland by St. Patrick, and was the only one observed during the first class of Irish saints, consequently, for above 100 years after." "It has been said that it was originally the liturgy of St. Mark, the evangelist;" "that it was used by Gregory Nazianzen," from whom it is traced to Germanus and Lupus, "the friends of St. Patrick, who received it from them." This mass continued to be employed in the Irish church to the time of Gillebertus, the first papal legate in the 11th century, together with other officers, but always exclusively of the Roman—this fact is placed beyond contradiction by the legate himself, who tells us, in his book "*de Usu Ecclesiastico*," that he "has

* Histor. c. xxv. 10, and xxxii. 9. Gildas alleges (Uss. 34) that "the Britons were contrary to the whole world, and enemies to the Roman customs, as well in the mass as in their tonsure."

endeavoured to write out the canonical custom in saying the hours," &c., "for the purpose of procuring, that the various and schismatical * orders, with which Ireland is bewildered, may yield to one Catholic and Roman office." St. Bernard in his life of St. Malachy, (c. 2,) has told us, that this saint established the customs of Rome in all the churches; and "hence it is that, to this day, they chaunt and sing there at the canonical hours, according to the manner of the whole earth; whereas *before that this was not done*, not even in the city of Armagh itself."† Previously to this the Irish used chiefly, but not alone, the *Cursus Scotorum*, handed down, either through St. Irenæus of Lyons, or in the manner above related by Dr. Lanigan, from the Eastern church. "But," says this historian, "it must not be confounded with the liturgy usually called *Gallicana*, or the *Cursus Gallicanus*."

There are other material traces of this connection, which, although they may not prove a continued intercourse with the East, testify to the emanation from thence of the first founders of Christianity in Ireland; for they relate to the very principle of her establishment, and the machinery by which it was to be carried on and completed—the character of her episcopacy, and that of her monasteries and schools.

* Dr. Lanigan (c. xxv., 10,) considers that Gilbert made too much noise about this; and that the use of different offices was quite allowable, and not at all connected with schism.

† It would be tedious and unnecessary to detail all that might be transcribed respecting this liturgy; it suffices to prove that it was not Roman, and to refer to the notes of Dr. Lanigan, on sec. 9 and 10 of his 32nd chapter, for the rest.

The episcopacy of ancient Ireland was entirely formed on the model of that of the Eastern Church.—The number of bishops, for instance, was very great indeed, and their sees proportionately small. St. Bernard, in his life of Malachy, complains of it thus:—"Mutabantur et multiplicabantur episcopi pro libitu metropolitani, ita ut unus episcopatus uno non esset contentus, sed singulæ penè ecclesiæ singulos haberent episcopos;"—almost every church had its separate bishop. Nennius informs us, that St. Patrick ordained 365 of this order; but the papal See, when, in the 11th century, it put the finishing hand to the assimilation of the Irish Church to that of Rome, was assiduous in reducing their number. Thus it is notorious, that the measures of Cardinal Paparo that were proposed in the council of Kells, A.D. 1152—"decédentibus choroepiscopis et exilium sedum episcopis in Hiberniâ," on the decease of the choroepiscopi and bishops of small Sees—of converting the existing village bishoprics into rural deaneries, were followed up by Rochfort, bishop of Meath, A.D. 1216. The words of his Synod are that, from being Sees, they are to become "capita decanatum ruralium"—"heads of rural deaneries"—referring to Athenry, Kells, Slane, Trim, and Dunshaughlin; all of which were then merged in the bishopric of Meath (Wilkins' Concilia.) This diocese now comprehends 15 at least of such minor sees—(Ware's Bis. p. 138). In the appointment to these Irish sees there existed, even down to the 11th century, the Oriental practice of hereditary succession, of which Bernard most espe-

cially complains (Vit. Mal.) “A most pernicious custom,” he says, “had gained strength by the diabolical ambition of some men in power, who possessed themselves of bishoprics by hereditary succession; nor did they suffer any to be put in election for them, but such as were of those of their own tribe or family: and this kind of execrable succession made no small progress, for fifteen generations had passed over in this mischievous custom, in the primacy itself.” Yet the appointment was constitutionally by election, and according to Eastern practice; thus Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, (Uss. Syl., p. 96,) in his letter addressed to Murchardach king of Ireland, about A. D. 1100, states that he has been told, “*Episcopos in terrâ vestrâ passim eligi*” *—“That bishops in your land are every where elected.” The testimony of Bernard confirms the fact, while it reconciles the apparent contradiction by informing us, that the men of power proposed none for the election, which they entirely influenced, but persons of their own family or tribe. The elections were made by the king, clergy and people, and the prelate consecrated by the bishops.† Now these characters of primitive Irish episcopacy,

* He adds—“*et sine certo episcopatus loco, et ab uno episcopo ordinari.*”

† From the Ulster Annals, vol. iv., p. 386—“*Electi a Rege nobilibus clero et populo, ab episcopis consecrabantur.*”

Doctor O’Conor subjoins the following important note:—*Mos hic eligendi episcopos extitit inter Hiberniæ Indigenas, usque ad nostra tempora, ut patet ex variis epistolis MSS. extantibus in Bibliothecâ Stowense; nec unquam publicé hac-*

the great number of bishops, their hereditary or family succession, yet appointment by election without reference to Rome, were all of them traces of Eastern origin ; and at all events undeniable evidence of the non-existence of papal connection in their commencement.

The system of monachism in Ireland is confessedly oriental ; it is believed to have been imported first into Rome itself, A.D. 347, by St. Athanasius, taking refuge there from the persecution of the Arians in Egypt. The account given of this emigration by Gennadius, (de Scriptor. illust. c. 44) a writer that, according to Baronius, flourished before the year 493, is rejected by Dr. Lanigan, but accredited by Dr. O'Connor (Proleg. i. p. 78). It is as follows :—*Placuit nempé altissimo, ut St. Athanasius, ex Egypto pulsus ab Arianis, vitam monasticam, usque ad id tempus in occidente ignominiosam, Scotis, Attacottis, aliisque barbaris Romanum imperium vastantibus, S.S. Ambrosio et Martino opem ferentibus, propalaret ann. circ. 336.*—It pleased the Most High, that St. Athanasius, driven by the Arians from Egypt, should promulgate the monastic life, which was hitherto considered to be ignominious in the West, to the Scots, the Attacotti," (both of

tenuis professi sunt Episcopi Hiberni jus Episcopos eligendi sibi exclusivè competere, usque ad annum 1805.

Caveant Hiberni quomodo jura sua antiqua sinant sibi eripi. Ab uno enim passu facile progreditur ad alium ; et nova hæc, et hactenus inaudita disciplina, semel instituta, difficile est quin Ecclesiastica Libertas omnino pereat, et plurima inusitata instituantur.

them inhabitants of Ireland,) "and other barbarians wasting the Roman empire, about the year 336; the Saints Ambrose and Martin assisting."

I shall not enter into a discussion respecting the authenticity or truth of this story; nor investigate here whether Dr. Ledwich is justified in all that he relates of the order of *Culdees*, or Mr. Moore in declaring their history to be entirely fabricated.*—There is no doubt of the existence in Iona, and other foundations of St. Columbkille—at Kells, at Durrow, and elsewhere in Ireland—of an order of monks, although he certainly does not call them *Culdees*, whose rules were of the Eastern fashion, and who were subject to a government quite at variance with the discipline of the Roman church. Bede, in writing of Iona, expresses himself thus:—"Habere autem solet ipsa insula rectorem semper abbatem, Presbyterum, cujus juri et omnis provincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi, ordine inusitato, debeant esse subiecti; juxta exemplum primi doctoris illius," (sc. St. Columbæ,) "qui non episcopus, sed presbyter extitit et monachus."—"But this island has always for its governor the abbot, a presbyter, to whose

* The fable of the *Culdees*, he says, (Hist. ii. 62) "came forth from that same mint of fiction, which sent forth the forty counterfeit kings of Scotland; being obviously invented to provide for that series of imaginary monarchs, a no less shadowy array of priesthood, under the denomination of *Culdees*." Yet does Dr. Ledwich assert that the 3rd Book of the Ecc. Hist. of Bede "is principally employed in praise of the *Culdees*" (p. 110.) The contradiction exists in the mis-application of a name. Bede's subject is the monastery of Iona, but he never once calls the monks *Culdees*. See Appendix.

jurisdiction both the entire province, and even the bishops themselves, by an unusual arrangement, should be subjected; according to the example of that first teacher," St. Columb, "who was not a bishop, but a priest or monk." This was the case not only in Iona, but in every monastery founded by that saint; over all of which that of Iona, or Hy-Columbk-kill, was the head, because that it contained the remains of the founder—"In quibus omnibus idem monasterium insularum, in quo ipse requiescit corpore, principatum tenet." (See Bede, lib. iii. c. 4.) Yet is it an error to suppose that this establishment was adverse to the episcopal form of government in the church, although it was administered therein after a manner altogether different from that of Rome; for "Columba did acknowledge that bishops were necessary for ordaining others into the ministry, and always had one in his monastery, as Bishop Ussher tells us out of the Ulster Annals, Prim. 701;" and Bede records that bishops were ordained in this island, and sent forth from thence to spread the Gospel in England and elsewhere. Thus, he says, that agreeably to the desire of Oswald, king of Northumberland, "ab hâc ergo insulâ, ab horum collegio monachorum, ad provinciam Anglorum instituendam in Christo, missus est Aidanus, accepto gradu episcopatus; quo tempore eidem monasterio Segenius abbas et præsbyter præfuit;" and again, "ipsum esse dignum episcopatu—mitti debere decernunt, sicque illum ordinatum miserunt." (Bede, Ecc. Hist. iii. c. 4 and 5) And in his life of St. Cuthbert

he informs us, while writing of the See of Lindisfarne (p. 16) that, although small, it "contains both a bishop and an abbot;" and that they are all of them monks, and under the abbot's jurisdiction.

Such is the character of these monasteries, entirely differing from those of Roman origin. Their rule of faith is certified, by Cotton, Spelman, Camden and Selden, to have been Egyptian, before Austin's arrival in 597.* One very remarkable circumstance I must add respecting them, which savours much indeed of oriental prejudices; and that is, the frequent choice of islands by their founders for their locality. Thus did the predecessors of the Irish monks congregate in the well-known islands of Canobus and Lerins, in the Mediterranean, in which last Patrick is said to have spent some years of his youth. Their attachment to these islands was, no doubt, cherished by the fond associations which existed between these fit retreats for security, education, and the meditating spirit, and the isle of Patmos, where their principal apostle was favoured with his divine revelations.

There is one very striking trace of Eastern connection, not dubiously marked in tradition, but written in permanent letters—the advocates of the Romanists are not, I believe, in general, aware of its existence; and yet we produce it from a document which they have for centuries preserved, referred to ever with confidence, and revered with peculiar veneration—the cele-

* Ledwich, p. 88.

brated Book of Armagh.* It contains a copy of the New Testament in Latin, written in general in the Irish character; perhaps in the 7th, and certainly before the close of the ninth century. I shall not dwell further upon this interesting MS. at present, than to state the following undoubted facts respecting its authenticity. This volume was, for a long time, the property of the metropolitans of Armagh; preserved by them with such jealousy, that a family to whose custody it was entrusted, received the name of *mayer* † from the office, and oaths that were administered upon it were taken with a peculiar sanction. The mayers held eight townlands, called Bally-Mayer, (ṢṢ40Ṗ) from the see, for the performance of their duty, as guardians of the valued deposit.

This book contains just as many words and letters, in Greek characters, as are sufficient to afford indisputable proof of the existence of Eastern intercourse, and as many as, under the circumstances, might be expected to remain. It has the pater noster, written in the Latin language, and Grecian letter of a very ancient form; and the names of the books are inscribed in that character at the tops of several pages. One instance of the use of this letter is remarkable. In the subscription to the Gospel of St. Matthew, where

* An account of it will be found in Sir W. Betham's Antiquarian Researches. It is said to have been bestowed on the see of Armagh by Aidus, bishop of Sletty, who wrote it in the year 698.

† Mayer, or in Irish, ṢṢ40Ṗ, signifies keeper.

the word "finitum" occurs, it is written thus, commencing with the Greek letter ϕ —*ϕinitum*;—although the Irish possess, in capital and in small letter, a character conveying the full power of an *f*, and equivalent to that of ϕ . We shall return to this subject.

The historian, Dr. Lanigan, as has been already observed, argues thus—"If the Irish had been converted by missionaries from the East, how came it to pass, that the liturgy and every part of the church service were written in Latin?" (Eccl. Hist. ii. 386.) The question is reasonable—it admits also the full force of this argument drawn from letters and from language. We have produced abundant reasons to explain why the Latin was the tongue used on these occasions; and it is quite sufficient here to observe, that the Greek was clearly out of the question, as that language would be nowhere understood; whereas the Latin was universally so throughout the Roman empire and its immediate neighbourhood. But this occurrence of Grecian letters in writing, while it demonstrates that they were introduced into Ireland, and known there before the time when this book was written, exhibits just as much of the habit of employing them as might reasonably be expected to be met with. It should be further observed, that, if any one be inclined to deny the great antiquity of this volume, and assign to it a more modern date, the effect will be to render more marked its testimony to the existence of Eastern influences; for they must have been very strong and abiding, to exhibit thus their symptoms at an increased distance of time.

It is further remarkable, that the Latin version of the New Testament contained in this book, differs in many important readings from that of St. Jerome, or any of the existing Vulgate, or Italic translations. It is a version that seems to have been peculiar to Ireland. We possess some most ancient, and some particularly beautiful MSS.* copies of the Gospels, and some of the Epistles, in the Latin tongue ; in many such readings these native MSS. all agree ; exhibiting in them so far a discrepancy from the Romish church, and proving how incorrect is the assertion of Mr. Carew and Dr. Lanigan—that “until the beginning of the eighth century, the Irish read the old Vulgate, as it existed before the introduction of the corrections borrowed from St. Jerome.” This book,† for instance, does not contain the much-debated text of 1 John, v. of the three heavenly witnesses, the claim of which to authenticity now rests so very much upon its existence in the Vulgate ; and it agrees with our other Irish versions in the following particular passage :—The book called the Book of Dimma, now in the collection of the University of Dublin, and which had

* There are, in the library of the University of Dublin, the magnificent Book of Kells, justly styled “*Totius Europæ facili princeps* ;” the fine Book of Durrow—both of them said to have been written by St. Columbkille himself ; and the Book of Dimma ; all of them containing the same peculiar Latin version of the Gospels. An accurate collation of these is a great desideratum.

† It is curious that it contains the Epistle of St. Paul to the Laodiceans, with the following note.—“*Sed Hirunumus eam negat esse Pauli*”—“Jerome denies it to be Paul’s.”

once been my property, possesses an additional verse in Mat. xxvii. which was very properly condemned as spurious in the Council of Vienne, (A. D. 1311) and does not appear in any Vulgate or Italic translation now existing that I know of. It occurs after the 48th verse—"Alius autem, acceptâ lanceâ, pungit latus ejus, et exivit aqua et sanguis"—"Another also, having taken up a spear, pierced his side, and there came forth water and blood." The next verse relates the last exclamation of Jesus; this verse, therefore, which represents that event as occurring before his death, is deservedly rejected. This is but one example, among many that occur, of renderings that are peculiar to these manuscript volumes.

There existed also several passages in the ancient national version of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, which exhibited not only a great discrepancy from Rome, but an assimilation to the East; they are preserved in the numerous quotations from the Bible, in which the accredited existing works of St. Patrick, and other ancient writers of our country abound. They come nearer to the Greek of the Septuagint, in the Old Testament, than to any of the translations of Italy. Many of these, with observations on them by Archbishop Ussher, will be found in his first chapter on the "Religion of the Ancient Irish"—it is not perhaps generally known how frequently they occur in these primitive writings. It must be added that St. Patrick, in his confession, distinctly quotes from the book of Eccle-

siasticus, as if it were divinely inspired—"Et iterum spiritus testatur"—"and again the Spirit beareth witness"—are his words; but that book, although it be now registered as canonical by the Romish church, was probably not so in the time of St. Patrick; at least it was excluded from the canon of St. Jerome in the fourth century.

Let us now conclude with picturing to ourselves some individual living in those times, some Romanist ecclesiastic for instance, visiting Ireland from England. Were he commissioned from the pope himself, he would not be permitted to exercise his ministry without producing a kind of clerical passport, according to the ancient canon of St. Patrick, (the 33rd) that "a clergyman, who comes over to us from Britain without a letter, shall not exercise his ministry," &c. Let us suppose then, that after the delivering of his credentials to the abbot of the monastery where he visits—a presbyter, whose head is shorn with the semicircular, and not the coronal tonsure—he finds his host preparing for the celebration of Easter Sunday on the morrow; a feast which he had just kept on the preceding Sabbath with those of his own communion in England. The next day, he accompanies his good brother to his cathedral, and sees him assume, though but a presbyter, the supreme authority there. The service proceeds, and the ancient litany of St. Mark, not the Roman, is said or sung, the laity all joining in the chaunt; he reads from a new version of the Scriptures, in which several of the words and letters

and the Pater Noster, are written in the Greek character. The preacher of the day quotes, as inspired, a book that is not admitted as such by the canon of his church; and when he expects to be invited, as a brother, to the table of the Lord's Supper, he finds that "it is the manner to hold the faith and religion of the English in no account at all, nor to communicate with them any more than with the pagans;"* (Bede Ecc. Hist. ii. 20) and that they would not even "open their minds to them on matters of Christian knowledge." Uninvited to spiritual communion, and meeting with no sympathy whatsoever in his religious views, or Romish exercises, he walks abroad in order to beguile the time; and makes some inquiries about the strange people among whom he is sojourning. He finds that the abbot himself is under the spiritual subjection of a presbyter, the abbot of the island of Iona; that the bishop of the district is so too (Bede Ecc. Hist. l. iii. c. 4, 5.) He is informed that many of this episcopal order have been elected in hereditary succession, but still elected; and that many thus chosen have been sent forth, without any other authority or approbation, even to his own native province, from that extraordinary isle—

* See a letter of Aldhem, to Gerutius, king of Cornwall, (Rees' Welch Saints, p. 311) in which he complains of the Welch—that they not only adhered to the tonsure and cycle, or time of Easter; but "doe exceedingly abhorr communion with us" (the English); "insomuch that they will not join in prayer with us in the church, nor enter into communion with us at the table; they refuse to give us the kisse of pious fraternity." The passage from Bede ii. 20, shows us, that this sternness was equally practised by the Irish bishops.

("ordine inusitato.") He observes the number of bishops to be considerable and their sees to be but small. He witnesses also some peculiar ceremonies, specially in the mode of baptism ; observes that the clergy have their wives and their children ; and, being versed in Ecclesiastical History, he is struck with the many traces of Eastern connection that are thus manifested around. He is even reminded, by the insular situation of several of the monasteries, of the isle of Patmos ; and, by the seven churches that are clustered around so many of them, of those in the Apocalyptic vision of St. John. These curious coincidences, not all of them obvious, or any of them decisive of themselves, appear to him to be remarkable, when combined and considered in connection with all that he has read or heard ; and he justly and decidedly concludes, that this Irish church, which flourishes thus so independently, must be of Eastern descent ; for it exhibits no symptoms whatsoever of an orthodox connection with that of Rome, not even by the existence of relics or images within the cathedral, or of celibacy out of it. Yet, although he condemns the violence with which the innovating errors of Rome are protested against by these schismatics, he holds not against them the doctrine of exclusive salvation—it was not yet holden by his own church. On the contrary, remarking in the Irish Church, her scriptural schools, and her saints, their learning, and their hallowed walk ; perceiving them to be men, indeed, who "observed only those works of piety and charity which they could learn in

the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolical writings," and were "diligent to perform the works of faith, and godliness, and love, according to the manner used by all holy men," (Bede iii. 5, 4,) he generously testifies on his return, as Ionas (Life of Colombanus, c. 1,) did of Ireland, that "It was a nation, that, although without such laws as govern other people, flourished in the vigour of Christian doctrine, so as to exceed the faith of the neighbouring nations."

To return to the argument, let me now inquire—against the evidences of ancient tradition and authentic writings, continued through and preserved by Roman Catholics only, which we have detailed, as testimonies of the Eastern origin of the Irish Church, what have the Romanists to produce of undoubted authenticity, to found or maintain her claim to that honour? Not even the traces of an early connexion, "casual or occasional"—nothing but bold and dogmatic assertion, the browbeating and silencing declaration—"I have said it"—proclaimed with all authority for the last ten centuries.

Having, therefore, demonstrated the truth, and indeed shown it to be almost universally admitted, that Christianity was brought into Ireland many years before the usually alleged time of St. Patrick's first arrival in that country, and proved that neither he, or any other person, first introduced it as an emissary from Rome; having, also, dwelt upon the documents and traditions that attribute it to the missionaries of the Eastern and Gallic Churches; I

shall proceed to consider the facts that throw light upon the mission of that saint, its origin, and effects?

It will, perhaps, be expected that, after so much having been said of what St. Patrick *was not*, some account should be given, or conjecture at least presented, of who he really was, or whence he originally came—some arguments of his existence afforded, to prevent the reasoning against the truth of his Roman commission from impugning the entire of his story—some answer given to this reasonable question; if he was truly the apostle of the Irish and not an emissary of the Pope, from whence did he derive his authority, or receive his commission? It was necessary, in the first instance, under the circumstances of the case, to maintain the double negative, that neither St. Patrick or the primitive Irish church had any connection with Rome; and it was also convenient to exhibit the strong proofs that exist, that her origin was Eastern and Gallican, and of far greater antiquity than that which is usually assigned to the first visit of St. Patrick, A.D. 432; for from these principally I feel compelled to the decided opinion, that this celebrated person was himself a remarkable channel for conveying evangelical truth from this very stream, and watering Ireland with its blessings.

In bringing forward the powerful argument of four hundred years of silence on the subject of Patrick's connection with Rome, I cautiously applied it to that point alone, because, as unconnected with that city, his name occurs in very early letters of both the elder and younger Cumminian in the seventh cen-

tury ; he is mentioned by Adamnanus, Bede, St. Fiech, and others, within three centuries of his era. And above all, and what puts the fact of his eminence as well as that of his existence beyond all doubt, mention is made of him in two of our most ancient and authentic MSS.—the Book of Kells, and the before-mentioned Book of Armagh. This latter invaluable document, written about the year 700, contains—besides the confession of St. Patrick, his life by Tirechan, &c.—the following entry in the 24th page in reference to the confession, at the end of which it is written— ‘ *Huc usque volumen quod Patricius manu conscripsit suâ* ’—“so far the volume which Patrick wrote with his own hand.” It then records his death in the following words—“*Septimâ decimâ Martis die translatus est Patricius ad cœlos*”—“on the 17th of March, Patrick was translated to the heavens.” To these abundant evidences, we must add the testimony of tradition ; especially that already urged, and which exists in the nomenclature principally of cathedrals, abbies and ecclesiastical establishments, many of them upwards of a thousand years old.

But from whence did this celebrated personage transfer into Ireland the Gospel which he preached ? If at all, and no Irishman will permit this to be questioned, it must surely have been from Rome, or from the East—through the Western, or through the Oriental channel. If not from Rome, it must have been from the other source. We perceive then at once the value of our negative reasoning, and how

substantially it lays the foundation of the positive assertion that

ST. PATRICK WAS A MEMBER OF THE EARLY GALLICAN, AND OF THE EASTERN CHURCH.

To commence with the place of his birth. It is contended for by many, and among others by Dr. Lanigan and Mr. Moore, that it was Boulogne-sur-Mer, in the province of Bretagne, in France. But this is very doubtful. It is of far greater consequence, and a truth that is admitted by all, that he spent many years of his youth, and received his early education, in Gaul; although, as to particulars, the usual diversities of opinion exist. He is most generally supposed to have received his first instruction from a maternal uncle, St. Martin of Tours; and I cannot feel that it requires any great exercise of faith to believe the connection, evidenced as it is by so many authorities of all ages, and made probable by the circumstance already recorded, of the existence in the same book—the Book of Armagh and of St. Patrick—of the confession of that saint, and the life of St. Martin by Sulpicius Severus. Again, on this subject of his early pupilage, it is said to have been completed under Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, with whom he is supposed to have studied 18 years; and the ancient hymn of Fiech declares, that a great part of his youth was spent in the monastery of St. Lerins, an island of the Mediterranean Sea.

Most interesting evidences of this Gallican con-

H

nection are afforded by the Irish historians, that are entirely reconcilable with that general tenor of history, which records the repeated incursions of the Picts and Scots upon the paralysed extremities of the Roman empire in Britain, and their following even of its retiring armies through Gaul. Our annals inform us of this latter fact in the instances of Irish kings—that Nial* of the nine hostages lost his life in one such foray on the banks of the Loire; and that Dathi, his successor, was killed in another, and his army dispersed by storm and lightning among the Alps. It is further said, that in one of these Patrick was taken as a prisoner by Nial, and by him brought over to Ireland; where he underwent that captivity, which he is acknowledged to have for many years endured.

It is also recorded that he afterwards visited Gaul, and was there ordained by some bishop of that nation; and that, returning to Ireland, he brought over from thence many peculiar ceremonies of the Eastern church;—but, previously to the dwelling upon these, I must add the testimony which the apostle in his own writings affords to this early Gallican connection, and perhaps to his birth in Gaul. In his confession he expresses his desire to visit his Gallican brethren—“*Gallicos fratres meos.*” These persons were his brethren in the flesh—his fellow-countrymen—or his spiritual brethren. I am contented with either of these interpretations, they

*Keating's History of Ireland, p. 313.

equally tend to the point at which I would arrive ; and they both of them suit with Patrick's claim, already noticed, which he makes to the Galli as being of his community, where, in his letter to Coroticus, he alludes to them as "*civibus meis*." These Gallican relations are mentioned in the most authentic lives of St. Patrick ; but it is so difficult to rely on them, that I would confine myself on this head to the evidence of our apostle, afforded in his works ; and shall merely refer for some interesting matter respecting it, to Mr. Petrie's Essay on the Round Towers of Ireland.—(Trans. R.I.A., Vol. XX. p. 164.)

Such are the proofs which establish, even from his infancy, a connection between St. Patrick and ancient Gaul—they consist of his probable birth in that country ; his certain education, his ultimate ordination, there ; the existence of his kindred in the place, acknowledged by himself, and recorded by all who relate his history ; the fact of his having been taken thence a captive in his early youth, with the other circumstances already detailed—add to these that it is a truth that is almost universally admitted by history and tradition.

Yet still it may be alleged, that this demonstration of the existence of a Gallican church, and St. Patrick's being of it, does not impugn the doctrine of his ultimate connection with Rome, and rather brings us nearer to Italy and the Papal communion ; but we have seen that Patrick, in his letter to Coroticus, where he mentions two distinct bodies of

Christians existing in Ireland—the Gallican and the Roman—makes claim to the former as that to which he belonged : and it is clear that, whoever were his teachers, they formed no link between him and Rome, for all his ceremonies, rules, and discipline, were of decidedly Eastern character ; and, whatever might possibly have been the tendencies and influences of some of them, he as steadily abided by the practices of his oriental mother, as his spiritual progeny in Ireland is said to have abided by his in after-times.

Writing of the paschal system, Dr. Lanigan says, that our apostle “merely delivered it to the Irish churches, according as he had found it followed in some parts of Gaul ;” and again, the same historian asserts, of the ancient liturgy of St Mark, that it “was brought into Ireland by St. Patrick,”—either such as was used by Germanus and Lupus, Gallican bishops, “the friends of St. Patrick, who received it from them ;” or such as, according to Villaneuva (*Opus. S. Pat.*, p. 28), he learned it from Martin of Tours ; or, as Ussher supposes, he was first taught it in the monastery of St. Lerins. It is said, of the tonsure of the Irish, that he introduced the fashion of it among them, “with all their other ecclesiastical rules and usages.”—(*Moore, Vol. I. p. 283.*) The monastic system of the ancient Hibernians is also asserted, by Probus and others, to have been of his introduction. Now these—the time of celebrating Easter, the peculiar office, the mode of tonsure, the monastic rule—are all of them acknowledged to have

been purely Eastern in their character, as they were practised by the Irish.

It will be admitted as a fair conclusion, that whatever circumstances tend to establish the fact of the oriental origin of our church, must be allowed to prove that its principal founder was of the Eastern communion. To these, therefore, I shall again refer (see p. 64, &c.); and merely add that, whether we believe or not the allegations of Mr. Petrie—and they appear to me to be well established by proof—that many of the numerous small churches that are to be found in Ireland are coeval with the age of St. Patrick; one thing is certain, that their diminutive size and grouping in clusters establish the fact, that their model, in these points of view at least, is purely oriental. The congregations of the Eastern church were multiplied, and therefore small; and their bishops were many in proportion to the number of churches. We have already dwelt upon this point; it enables us, without much difficulty, to admit as truth the paradox of the historian Nennius, that St. Patrick ordained three hundred and sixty-five bishops and three thousand presbyters in Ireland. This fact, asserted in A.D. 850, whether it be exaggerated or not, casts an oriental hue over the entire of the ministry of our apostle, who first gave to our church the plan of those chapels of small dimensions, so evidently borrowed from the East. I have already pointed out the circumstantial evidence of an Eastern origin, which is afforded by the frequent grouping of these foundations of St. Patrick and his contemporaries into seven churches, and by their planting

them in islands*—all savoring of an association with the memory of St. John.

It does, therefore, appear probable, that St. Patrick formed one great link in the chain that united the apostle St. John with Columba, in the manner that is testified by Colman, and is recorded by Bede; and it is also probable that it was he that transplanted, from the church of St. Irenæus of Lyons, the scion which afterwards flourished so prosperously under his culture in Ireland. We can, upon this conjecture, well understand, why he is not especially mentioned by name in the controversy at Whitby. He is not noticed there by the Scottish advocate, who quotes only the names of St. John and of Columba, the first and last great personages in the series; and of course he is omitted by Wilfred, whose object was to innovate on all that had been previously established, and to slight all those who had been hitherto revered in our islands. We are thus enabled to reconcile the fact of this silence with that of St. Patrick's existence; and even the obstinacy of Colman with the received opinion, that the Irish abided pertinaciously by their customs, because they had received them from St. Patrick. By no other supposition than that, of his having been the channel through which these venerated and oriental practices had been conveyed to them, can these contradictions be reconciled; while the doc-

* This conjecture, put forth in my first published work upon this subject, upwards of twenty years ago, has, I find, since occurred to the Dean of Ardagh. See "Ireland and her Church," p. 48.

trine of his commission from Rome only tends to add to their number, and to increase the difficulties with which they abound.

Another argument in support of his oriental origin may be drawn from this circumstance, that all that we meet with in those ancient documents that bring us into connection with Patrick, is stamped with some Eastern mark. Thus, in his confession and other genuine works, he quotes, as we have already noticed, from a version of the Bible more akin to the Septuagint than to the Vulgate; and his inspired Scriptures vary much from those of Rome, both in respect to her canon and translation; while the use of the Greek letters in the Book of Armagh seems, of itself, to determine the question. This book is, no doubt, much more modern than the era of our saint; but it was the book of his cathedral, and had been partly copied from an autograph volume of his own. It contains his confession, his life, the life of his uncle St. Martin, and therefore is peculiarly his book. In this MS. the use of the Greek letters is unnecessarily continued, and where they are not in the least required for either ornament or elucidation. The instances are such as *κατα* instead of "secundum" at the top of many of the pages; innumerable capitals every where interspersed, the entire pater noster in the Greek letters, but Latin tongue; and most especially the following entry on the last folio of the book, at the end of the epistle to Aurelius from Sulpicius Severus, the biographer of St. Martin of Tours:—

“Περ ΜΑΡΤΙΝΙ ΣΥΦΦΡΑΓΙΑ ΣΥΜΜΥΜ ΔΕΠΡΕΚΟΡ ΔΝΜ ΥΤ ΜΙΚΗΙ ΣΑΠΙΕΝΤΙΑΕ ΔΩΝΕΤ ΔΙΥΙΝΑ ΜΥΝΕΡΑ.” “Per Martini Suphphragia Summum Deprecor Dnm ut Mikei Sapientiæ Donet Divina Munera.” “Through the intercession of Martin, I supplicate the Lord, to bestow on me the divine gifts of wisdom.”

This appeal to the intercession of St. Martin here, may prove that this entry is not of primitive antiquity—but it is very ancient ; and it is not to be omitted, that the occurrence of Greek letters in an entry so tinged with a Romanist hue, renders the evidence they afford of the orientality of our native church more positive and unquestionable.

There are some recorded facts which put it beyond a doubt, that St. Patrick was an apostle of Columba's peculiar church—the church of the Scots—that church which Colman traces from the latter to St. John ; and even that he was a predecessor, and teacher, and spiritual father of Columba's immediate ancestors. The elder Cumman, a biographer of this celebrated personage, wrote his life about the year 596. His information is remarkable, it is as follows:—“Patricius namque, primus Hiberniæ apostolus, avum proavumque” Columbæ, “Fergusium nempé et Conallum, benedixit.”—“For Patrick, the first apostle of Ireland, blessed his grandfather and great-grandfather—to wit, Fergus and Conall.” This he did in his character of “Pater civium,” attributed to him by some ; or of “Papa,” conferred on him by the younger Cumman ; or in that of “Master of the Scots”—“Magistri Scotorum”—as he is pe-

cularly styled in that most ancient and interesting MS. the Antiphonarium Benchorense, which formerly belonged to the monastery of Columbanus at Bobbio, and is now in the Ambrosian Library of Milan. The connection between these two eminent saints is further confirmed, by a casual notice that occurs in the second preface to Adamnanus' Life of Columba; where, in making mention of Brito, a holy Hibernian, who is said to have foretold Columbkille's future renown, he calls him "a disciple of St. Patrick the bishop"—"S. Patricii episcopi discipulus."

There is, indeed, in the magnificent Book of Kells, which is in the Library of our College—a book to which I have already referred—an ancient entry which decides the fact, that Patrick was a highly venerated saint of the Columban church. This book was written by Columbkille himself,—it is so recited in the following passage, extracted out of the annals of the Four Masters, ad annum 1006:—*"Evangelium magnum Columbae Cille, a fure ablatum nocte ex sacro domo inferiori ecclesiæ lapideæ magnæ Cellensis—præcipua reliquia sacra juramentorum occidentalis mundi fuit ista, propter honorem ejus scriptoris sapientis—et inventum est post xx. noctes et duos menses, postquam furte ablatum fuisset ejus aurum; et cespitibus involutum."* "The great Gospel of Columb Kill, stolen by night from the sacred house of the great stone church of Kells—this was the principal sacred relic for swearing on of the Western world, in honour of its learned scribe—and it was found after twenty nights and two

months, after that its gold was stolen away ; and covered with turf." That this book was coeval with him can scarcely be doubted by any person acquainted with ancient handwriting ; however superficially viewed, it presents internal evidences of the remotest antiquity. It is a copy of the four gospels in the Latin tongue, and is written in finely formed uncial letters of the Irish character—it is not the vulgate translation. It is preceded by many entries ; and on the last page of these is one that is very remarkable ; it is thus—"Rogo beatitudinem tuam, Sce Presbiter Patrici, ut quicumque hunc librum manu tenuerit, meminerit Columbæ scriptoris, qui hoc scripsi [] met evangelium, per xii. dierum spatium."—"I beseech your blessedness, holy Presbiter Patrick, that whosoever may hold this book in his hand, may remember Columba the writer ; who wrote [] gospel, in 12 days space of time."

It is much to be regretted that we cannot determine whether or not the word "scripsi" be followed by the letter t ; and whether, therefore, the supplication be in the first or third person ; in other words, whether it be made by Columba himself, or in his behalf. Some excellent judges incline to think the writing to be the same as that of the rest of the book, and of course coeval with Columba, and all agree that it is nearly so ;—but the fact of the invocation indicates an era somewhat later than that of St. Columbkille.

This entry would afford an interesting subject for discussion, but I shall not introduce it here ; for,

whether it be of Columba's or a later age, it affords a decisive proof of the universal veneration in which St. Patrick was holden, in the Irish church, by Columba and his disciples.

These, then, are the reasonings with which I would follow up the proofs of St. Patrick's connection with Gaul, in order to show further that, through that medium, he was also connected with the Eastern church—that he formed the principal link of union between it and the independent Irish church of Columba and of Colman, of Columbanus and of Cumman, of Iona and the Scots of ancient Ireland.

In conclusion, when once we disunite Patrick from Rome, we commence to arrive at something tangible concerning him; we can give him a local habitation and a name in the Ibero-Gallican church, and thus procure some promising clue to the mazes of his legend. Without this process, he must be ranked rather with the St. Andrew of Scotland, the St. George of England, the St. Denys of France; but, through it, he may take his just station as the first great apostle of our native church, although not perhaps its actual founder. I consider that, as he was the friend of Columba's great-grandfather, the period of his arrival here, A.D. 432, which is generally acquiesced in, cannot be far wrong; and it is a date that agrees well with his Gallican connections, which we have every reason to believe have their foundation in the truth.

It is remarkable that, according to this theory of Patrick, we can account for his successes, and the

failures of Palladius. He came over in all the simplicity and divine authority of a primitive apostle of his meek and lowly master—Palladius was accompanied with all the pomp and circumstance of a missionary from Rome. This difference has been remarked and dwelt on; but this is not the place to urge it further—already have I ventured upon conjecture* beyond what I originally intended.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE IRISH CHURCH, AND ITS REJECTION OF THE SUPREMACY OF ROME.

Having endeavoured to refute the first great dogma of the Romanists, that “the Irish Church was founded by a Pope,” to exhibit its oriental origin, and to demonstrate that its greatest Apostle was not even in connection with Rome, but was himself a missionary from some branch of the primitive Eastern Church, I shall proceed to show that, on whatever side the truth lies on these points, its founders did not hold the doctrines of the present Roman Catholics, as defined and promulgated by the Council of Trent.

This is the principal issue after all; for, at this

* The lives of St. Patrick are so replete with fiction, and the contradictions respecting him are so very numerous and irreconcilable, that I have endeavoured to depend mainly on the testimony he himself affords us in his genuine writings; but, as I have not, with confidence, alluded to more than three of these, I shall find it necessary to state my reasons shortly in an Appendix, and to take a slight review of their authenticity and character.

distance of time—more than fourteen hundred years from the alleged arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland—it is of little comparative importance whence the blessings of Christianity were introduced into this island. The doctrines likewise which at that remote era were inculcated throughout Christendom, whether Western or Eastern, were as yet untainted with that error which, in two centuries after, was spreading widely over the face of the Catholic Church, and so obscured its genuine features, as to require the rough cleansing of the Reformation to restore in it the pristine likeness to that Word of God, from which it originally emanated, and to which it strictly assimilated at its birth.

The most material of these doctrines is that which affects the rule of faith, and fixes an authority by which such religious doubts are to be removed, and differences reconciled, as will occur in a world which has fallen as much from original intelligence, as from primitive purity. This brings us, therefore, back again, in a great degree, to the question of the real mother church of the land; and compels us to deny and to contend against that other Romanist dogma, so often advanced by the papal, and refuted by the Protestant, advocates—and now again declared, with much confidence, by Doctor Rock (p. 6)—that “from its very beginning, through all ages to the present time, the Irish Church has been closely united to Rome; and, while it has acknowledged, has also paid obedience to, the papal supremacy.”

The assertion of Lord John Manners, made in the

House of Commons, and which it is the object of the Doctor to refute, was, that the Irish Church "was for hundreds of years independent of Rome ; and it was not till an English king conquered Ireland, that the supremacy of the Pōpe was acknowledged by it."

The allegation of the Romanist is entirely founded in error ; that of the Protestant is not altogether accurate, for there was an intermediate era between that in which the Irish was entirely independent of the Pope, and did not pay the least "obedience to the papal supremacy"—on the contrary, rejected it with unquestionable decision—and the time when an English king invaded (not conquered) Ireland ; when the death-blow was given to the long-declining independence of the Irish Church, and the Pope was proclaimed sole successor to the long divided supremacy.

The facts relating to the connection of Ireland with Rome cannot ever be clearly understood, unless we commence with a distinct division of our ecclesiastical history into these three eras. The full independence of our native church, and the full supremacy of the Romish in our isle, could never have coexisted ; but, as they did not abruptly succeed to each other, there was a long transition state of many centuries, in which the encroachment of the latter upon the former was uninterrupted but gradual. These three eras—of perfect independence, of papal encroachment, and of universal subjection to the supremacy of Rome—are very decidedly marked by events in the undoubted history of the Irish Church. It can

be demonstrated that, until the year 600, she enjoyed a complete freedom from all foreign interference whatsoever; that, from that time to the period of the Synod of Cashel, A.D. 1172, she maintained it, although chequered with the continued usurpations of the supreme pontiff; but that from that year she acquiesced entirely in his claims—for the very few struggles that she might have afterwards made against them, are so slight as not to deserve the name of national.

I have chosen for the limits of this intermediate age, the year 600 and the year 1172; the latter obviously, because it is the date of the celebrated Synod above-mentioned; the first, or A.D. 600, for many reasons—principally because that at that time Austin, the papal emissary, first arrogated for the Romish see a supreme authority over the British Church; and, in the year 606, the Emperor Phocas first conferred upon the Pope himself the title of Universal Bishop, which Gregory I. had but a few years before denounced as a symptom of Antichrist, when assumed by the Patriarch of Constantinople. (Epist. ad Maur. lib. III. Ep. 62, et ad Theod. III. Ep. 65, &c.) Again, the year 600 very nearly synchronises with the time from whence, as it is stated in the ancient catalogue of saints, a great degree of degeneracy in the national church had set in; and further, that time was also the age of Columbanus, whose heart was half with Rome, and who was the first of our natives of influence that acquiesced in any of her assumptions of pre-eminence, and thus levelled many

of the ancient obstructions to her silent and persevering encroachments.

It is sufficiently obvious, that the only proper way of refuting this assumption of the Romanists is, by examining into its truth as it regards the first of these great eras, a period of 170 years from the alleged arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland; for if, in the course of that long time, not a trace of her dependence and acknowledgment of papal supremacy appear, the dogma is fundamentally false, and no evidence of subsequent subjection can establish it. To that earliest period I shall, therefore, chiefly confine myself; yet not exclusively, for there are circumstances in the history of the papal encroachments of later days, which confirm still more strongly the fact of original independence.

To repeat the proposition for the truth of which I now contend, in order that it may be distinctly understood; it is this—

We learn, from all the documents connected with the early and authentic history of the Irish Church, that it was perfectly independent of Rome until long after the arrival of Austin in Britain; that the synod of Whitby, A.D. 664, found it so; that in it were advanced the first public pretensions of the Pope to spiritual authority over it, on an occasion that was trivial indeed, but which, from its importance in principle, gave rise to a struggle that lasted half a century more. At length the good fortune and perseverance of Rome prevailed; and from thenceforth she has enlarged her border on every inroad. In the

dark night of ignorance that followed the Danish devastations, her stealthy strides were more unnoticed and more efficient; yet was there a sufficient remnant of pristine liberty existing in the national church, to require for its destruction that last dread blow of the synod of Cashel, by which it was ultimately prostrated at the foot of the Italian pontiff, by the combined influence of Ireland's first British prince, and Rome's only English pope.

Long before the supposed period of St. Patrick's arrival, and in the year 381, a regulation had been made, at the council of Constantinople—"part of the second canon of that council—by which it is decreed, that the churches without the Roman Empire are to be administered according to the traditionary customs of their fathers." I quote the version of Dr Lanigan, (*Hist.* ii. pp. 271–2, and 290,) who affords in it his authority for asserting, that the privileges of this canon were claimed for the Irish church, (which was not within the limits of that Empire,) in that celebrated letter of St. Columbanus to Pope Gregory I., in which he requests that he may not be "annoyed by the Gallican clergy" of the Romish Church, on account of his peculiar observance of Easter; and "requests to be allowed to follow the traditions of his elders, if it be not contrary to faith." "We ask," he says, "for peace and ecclesiastical unity, such as that which St. Polycarp maintained with Pope Anicetus; and for permission to observe our own laws, according to the regulation made by the one hundred and fifty fathers of the Council of

Constantinople." It is manifest, then, from this letter of Columbanus, by the admission of the Ecclesiastical Historian ; and also from the canon alluded to, that the church of Ireland was, in the year 381, entirely independent of that of the Western Empire ; that her independence was acknowledged by a general council ; that it was acted upon by all her members ; and that it was asserted as a right universally admitted, against the most encroaching in these islands of the Roman pontiffs ; and by that one, among her eminent men, who first exhibited a disposition to yield to the increasing pretensions of the Papal See. The style and manner of this epistle are remarkable ; and whatever conclusion we may, according to our prepossessions, be inclined to draw from either, they combine to establish beyond a doubt the truths above-mentioned.*

The Irish church was found to be thus independent by St. Patrick in 432 ; we have seen (p. 63) that his title was *Magister Scotorum*, Master of the Scots, that his city of Armagh was called the Apostolic City, and his apostleship compared to that of Peter ; and the antient and curious catalogue of Irish saints, in describing the primitive state of religion in his time, tells us, of "the first order of Catholic saints," that they had "one head, Christ, and one leader, Patrick." This casual assertion of independence comes forcibly from a document, the character of which is manifestly Romanist ; but indeed the

* The words of the canon are—"Quas autem in barbaris sunt gentibus Dei ecclesias, administrare oportet secundum patrum, quæ servata est, consuetudinem."

entire tenor of my argument hitherto has led to the establishing of this truth, that the church of St. Patrick was quite unconnected with Rome. It is strange enough, that the inventors of the figments that were composed to prove the contrary, have admitted a story, exhibiting most strongly a tradition of Irish independence ; where they record the resistance of Ibar, one of the four bishops who are related to have preceded St. Patrick, to his assumption of any primatial authority that should be grounded on the warrant of the bishop of Rome. O'Halloran says that the answer of Ibar was, that they never acknowledged the supremacy of a foreigner.—Vol. II. 10. This is the account of a Roman Catholic historian, who at the same time remarks, “that a most uncompromising enmity existed in the minds of the Irish people against every thing connected with Rome.” The truth of this is further manifest from the little that is recorded of Palladius. It appears from the passage of Prosper, repeated in Bede, that he was commissioned by the Pope Celestine to go as a bishop to the Irish already “believing in Christ,” and, as Mr. Moore says, “for the superintendence of their infant church,” (vol. i. p. 209, &c.) This church had been already established according to the Eastern doctrine and discipline—Palladius was, therefore, as Dr. Ledwich truly asserts, “an intruder into a church that was complete and independent ;” and, as he came not only to innovate, but made the attempt with all the pomp and assumption of Rome, he was jealously viewed and angrily rejected. “He was forced to flee”

from the country," says Mr. Moore, "leaving behind him no other memorial of his labours, than the adage, traditional among the Irish, that not to Palladius, but to Patrick, did God grant the conversion of the Irish."

Passing on with the current of time, in the year 553 the question of the "Three Chapters" was agitated throughout Christendom, engaged the attention of princes, and the deliberation of general councils, and "awakened the alarm" of the see of Rome. The conduct of the prelates of our native church, when the matter was proposed to them, is thus related by Cardinal Baronius, in his annals—(ann. 566, No. 21): "All the bishops that were in Ireland, with most earnest study, rose up jointly for the defence of the three chapters. And, when they perceived that the Church of Rome did both receive the condemnation of the three chapters, and strengthen the fifth synod with her consent, they departed from her, and clave to the rest of the schismatics—animated with that vain confidence, that they did stand for the Catholic faith, while they defended those things that were concluded in the council of Chalcedon;" against which the decree of the fifth synod was opposed. This occurrence demonstrated, that any previous connection of the Irish church with the rest of Christendom was voluntary and independent, and that its bishops decidedly and unanimously rejected the authority of Rome. Saint Columbanus refers to it, in a letter addressed by him to Pope Boniface, in the year 610 or 613; and in a manner which indicates, that this spirit of independence had not yet died away, even in his more obse-

quious mind. He remonstrates sharply with the pontiff; and writes in a tone of rebuke respecting his predecessor Vigilus, such as no Romanist would dare to assume in modern days, when speaking of a Pope. He even plays thus disrespectfully on his name—"Vigila, quia forté non bené vigilavit Vigilus, quem caput scandali ipsi clamant."—"Be vigilant, for perhaps Vigilus, whom they cry out against as the origin of the mischief, was not vigilant enough."

The next most striking proof of national independence occurs in the case of St. Columbkille, of the sixth century, whose entire story, as recorded not two centuries after by Bede, exhibits it remarkably. This holy man was an abbot and a presbyter; and, although he belonged to an episcopal church, and had in his monastery a bishop whose office it was to ordain others to that order, he was, "*ordine inusitato*," supreme above these prelates; and over all those also who were ordained in, and sent forth from, his residence of Iona.

It is unnecessary for me to repeat the details of the assembly holden at Whitby some years later. It will be sufficient shortly, in order to preserve the unity of the subject, to recapitulate here the proofs which the narration affords of the complete independence of the Irish church, from its origin to the period of holding that council. It will be remembered that this formed the very head and front of Colman's argument, which he rested upon the "*tradition of his elders*," from Polycarp to Columbkille; that his opposition was chiefly directed against the assumption of authority

by Rome; that his failure was followed up by an angry conduct, which, as I have already urged, manifested the sorest jealousy of invaded independence; and that Wilfred in his speech admits it, when he accuses Cólman that, "out of the two utmost isles of the ocean, he and his party did fight the world." This independence is also to be implied from this fact, that then first the king Oswi heard of the keys of heaven having been committed to St. Peter, This doctrine of Rome's supremacy was then a perfect novelty in the British and Irish churches; a circumstance which, as far as Ireland is concerned, is further and casually evidenced by the recital of Bede, when he tells us of this king (Ecc. Hist. iii. 26)—that "ALTHOUGH educated among the Irish, he understood the Roman to be the Catholic and Apostolic Church"—a plain implication that the contrary was the doctrine of the native Irish.

It appears, therefore, that the independence of the Irish church was perfect until long after the year 600—But it will be proper here to answer, and refute, an argument that is relied on to maintain the contrary position.

The early acknowledgment of the supremacy of Rome is asserted by the Romanist historians, and they rest it upon the words of a canon, which is ascribed to a synod of St. Patrick, and which is thus:—"De alienis adeundis ad adjudicandum—si quæ quæstiones hâc insula oriantur, ad sedem Apostolicam referantur." "About going abroad for adjudication—if any questions arise in this island, let

them be referred to the Apostolic See." Another alleged canon runs thus—after decreeing with respect to any difficult cause that may arise, that it shall be referred to the chair of the archbishop of the Irish, *i. e.* Patrick, and to the examination of the prelate thereof; it adds—"but if there, by him and his wise men, a cause of this nature cannot easily be made up, we have decreed, it shall be sent to the See Apostolic—that is to say, to the chair of the Apostle Peter, which hath the authority of the city of Rome."

We must consider these canons in detail. The first of them, it is true, ordains, that all difficult questions that shall arise in this island shall be referred to "the apostolic see;" but it does not say "of Rome," nor did it intend to signify it. The canon means the see of St. Patrick, as expressed in the second canon—the see of Armagh, which went by the name of the apostolic city so late as the year 1014. It was, then, to Armagh, and not to a foreign tribunal, the judgment was to be referred. But, in fact, if it were to be sent abroad, it could not at that time have been to Rome *alone*, as to the apostolic see; for we find that in those days, and for two centuries after, even down to the times of St. Cumman the younger—as he states it in his letter to the abbot of Iona—the apostolic see of the Christian church was the "fourfold apostolic one of Rome, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria;" so that the words of this canon can give no greater right to Rome to claim supremacy over Ireland, than it does to the three other great patriarchates to do so.

At all events the authority of this canon is doubtful; it has always been considered as one of those that are merely ascribed to St. Patrick, and, as Mr. Moore says, "pronounced to be of later date," (vol. i. p. 225.)

As for the second canon, Dr. Lanigan tells us that he is led to "suspect," (vol. ii. p. 391,) "that this canon is not quite as antient as St. Patrick's time;" and doubtless he had good grounds to suspect, and even to deny, the antiquity of a document which styles the prelate of Armagh an archbishop—a title that was not conferred upon any Irish bishop until "the beginning* of the eighth century;" (Moore, v. i. 224,) nor given to the Irish primate with a pall, the peculiar badge of a popish archbishop, until the eleventh. Indeed it would be impossible for any candid author to admit as authentic a dictum, which is followed, in the very same page and hand, by an entry such as this—that between Patrick and Bridget there existed a friendship the most intimate—when it is notorious that she was but twelve years old when Patrick died, and died herself, A.D. 525.†

The historian calls it a "paraphrastic explanation" of the first canon; he likewise suspects it to be apocryphal; and in this he is followed by Wilkins, Spelman, Villaneuva, and others, who have excluded it from their collections. Doctor Rock also takes

* The first archbishop in England is said to have been Theodore, A.D. 673.

† I quote from the Book of Armagh itself, now before me. See Moore's History, Vol. I. p. 258.

no notice of it, when quoting the authority of the first canon alluded to. It is true that Dr. Lanigan is of opinion that it gives the just meaning of that canon ; but this is matter of opinion, not of fact, and in it I cannot but differ from him.

There is a third canon, which is said to have been passed in a synod of St. Patrick ; it is thus—"It is not lawful that any prelate of any of the churches of the Scots, should appeal from the decision of him," Patrick, "or his successors ; *for he has the jurisdiction, if cause should require it, over all the bishops and churches of the Scots.*"—Were this canon genuine, it would decide the question. I can reconcile with it the first of the canons of which I am now treating, if the interpretation which I contend for, as to the meaning of the term apostolic city, be the true one—nay, I conceive that the existence of the third canon proves *that* interpretation to be right—while the supposition of Dr. Lanigan, that the passage of the Book of Armagh explains the proper meaning of the first canon, introduces an irreconcilable contradiction between them.

The manner in which arguments are sometimes handled by polemical advocates, is well instanced by that in which this subject is presented to his readers by Mr. Carew of Maynooth, in his Ecclesiastical History ; (p. 252) he speaks of its being "ordained there, that all difficult questions should be referred to the decision of the Apostolic See of Rome." He then quotes the first canon from Ware ; and, referring in

a note to Ussher's Religion of the Antient Irish, (c. 8,) he leads his reader to suppose that he has the authority of this primate's great name for the assertions that he makes. The way also in which Mr. Moore, in his history, alludes to these documents is loose, and must lead to confusion. "We find," he says, "in a *canon* of one of the earliest synods held in Ireland, a clear acknowledgment of the *supremacy of the Roman see*. Nor was this recognition confined merely to words; as, on the very first serious occasion of controversy which presented itself, the dispute relative to the time of celebrating Easter, it was resolved, conformably to the words of *this canon*, that the question should be referred to the Head of Cities." Now to any reader of these paragraphs it would appear, as if there was but one canon; and that this acknowledged the supremacy of Rome, and designated her as "the Head of Cities;" whereas there are two alleged canons, and neither of them applying this epithet to Rome—the former not mentioning her name. Dr. Lanigan is more clear and more ingenuous than either; yet he also leaves us under the same impression as Mr. Carew with respect to Ussher, to whose work he refers, but without presenting to his readers his Grace's slighting words, which are as follows (c. 8)—"Neither do I well know what credit is to be given unto that *straggling* sentence, &c.—'If any questions do arise in this island, let them be referred to the see apostolic;' or that other decree attributed to Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus,

and Benignus,"—repeating the words of the second canon.

The influence of Mr. Moore makes it necessary that I should be thus detailed ; and also that I should still farther comment on this very erroneous paragraph in his history. His statement in it is very far from being correct, that "on the very first serious occasion of controversy which presented itself—the dispute relative to the time of celebrating Easter—it was resolved, conformably to the words of this canon, that the question should be referred to the Head of Cities." The reverse was the case in every point of view ; the Paschal question was not the first occasion of controversy ; nor was it referred to Rome as the "Head of Cities," or otherwise. The southern Irish sent thither, not to appeal but to inquire—not to offer obedience to the papal decree, but to investigate its justice ; and finally, as has been often repeated, St. Colman, with irritable jealousy, rejected the first attempt at such interference, which was clearly not made for upwards of two centuries after the alleged date of the apostle's canon. I must be excused these repetitions. Finally, events prove that this canon could not have been the law of the Irish church previously to the year 664, if indeed it ever were ; and therefore it is suspected and rejected by Dr. Lanigan and the best authorities.

The epithet "Head of Cities," which does not appear in the original canon, although inserted by Mr. Moore, was not, I believe, used in Ireland, as applied to Rome, until two centuries after the time

of our apostle. It is first used by St. Cummian in his epistle, and it is afterwards employed by St. Adamnanus, in a letter which bears date A.D. 700. See Ussher's Sylloge.

We possess the testimony of Bede's authentic history to the circumstance, that St. Austin, on his arrival in Britain as an emissary from Pope Gregory the Great, found the church of the Britons independent; and they resisted, even unto blood, the attempt to bring them under the supreme authority of the Pope. Although I have frequently brought the facts of this story before the public, they are of too great importance to be entirely omitted here—I shall, therefore, briefly relate them. The venerable historian informs us, that Austin had been received and acknowledged in a synod, as a preacher of righteousness; and had there proposed some changes in “discipline, rituals, and ecclesiastical government, for no difference of doctrine is mentioned.”* To this the Britons answered, “that they could not alter their old customs and ordinances, without the consent of their clergy and people;” “they desired, therefore, that they might have a second synod of a greater multitude.” In order that they should be enabled to form at this synod a just estimate of St. Austin, and the objects of his mission, he was permitted to enter first into the place where the synod was to meet; and they were, on their entrance, to form a judgment of them according to the following advice:—“If, when ye

* Rees's Account of Welch Saints, p. 288.

approach near, he ariseth courteously to you, think ye he is the servant of Christ, and so hear ye him obediently ; but, if he despise you, nor will vouchsafe to rise at your presence, which are the more in number, let him likewise be despised of you—and truly so did they. For it happened that, when they came thither, St. Austin was already there, and sat in his chair ; which, when they saw, straight waxing wroth, they noted him of pride ; and therefore endeavoured to overthwart and gainsay whatsoever he proposed ;”—which was, that “ if they would agree with Rome in the time of Easter, the ministering of baptism according to the Roman church,” &c. “ *all your other ceremonies, rites, fashions, and customs, though they be contrary to ours, yet we will willingly suffer them.*” But they replied, “ that they would doe none of the things requested, neither would they compte him for their archbishop ; saying with themselves—nay, if he would not so much as rise to us, truelie the more we should now subject ourselves to him, the more he would hereafter despise us, and set us at nought.”* At this St. Austin departed in great wrath, with a threatening prophecy of the vengeance of

* There is published in Wilkins's *Concilia*, vol. i. p. 26, in the original Welch tongue, a document which is headed in the Latin thus, “ *Responsio*,” &c. “ The Answer of the Abbot of Bangor, to Austin the Monk, seeking subjection to the Church of Rome.” It is said by Mr. Rees (p. 299) to be of doubtful authority, I therefore refrain from resting on it here. But, as Dr. Lanigan has asserted (ii. 381), that “ when the abbot of Bancor, in his letter to Augustin, declined his jurisdiction, he declared, however, his obedience to the church and to the pope,” &c. ; and has made this assertion, withholding the

heaven—"Quod ita ut prædixerat patratum est"—"Which was all done as he had foretold"—for the Britons were soon after invaded by Edilfred, an English prince, a convert of Austin; and "it is reported," says Bede, "that there were slain in the warre of them that came to praie about twelve hundred men, and only fifty to have escaped by flight."

All this happened in Britain; but the case of the Irish or Scottish church was at that time precisely the same. There is preserved in Bede (ii. c. 20) a letter from Laurentius and other assistants to Austin, addressed "to the Scots that inhabit Ireland," A.D. 609. This letter expresses itself thus—"Knowing the Britons, we thought that the Scots were better than they. But we learned, by Bishop Daganus coming into this island, and Columbanus the abbot coming into France, that these *differ nothing* from the Britons in their conversation; for Bishop Daganus, coming unto us, would not only not eat with us, but not so much as eat his meat in the house where we were." He tells us further, that it was "the manner of these Britons to hold the faith and religion of the English"—the late converts of Austin—"in no account at all, nor to communicate with them any more than with the pagans." And again, (lib. v. 23,)

letter; I must, in justice to the truth, refer to it, to show, that the obedience which it speaks of is only the exercise of "charity perfect" of Christians in honour preferring and loving one another; and that it distinctly declares thus—"and other obedience than this I do not know due to him whom you name to be pope."

“that the Britons would not open their minds to the English upon matters of Christian knowledge.”*

It is clear, from all our ancient history, that the attempt of Palladius, or some such other effort for proselytizing the Irish made by Rome, had at an early period disgusted and alarmed the simple and primitive Christian church of our native isle. Hence the violent expulsion of that papal emissary, the canon against foreign ministry, the jealousy of Ibar, the better authenticated jealousy and anger of Colman, the obstinacy of the Scots in the matter of Easter, the aversion to communion with the English converts of Austin, and, in the kindred church of the Britons, the rejection of his offers of compromise. This fact is made more interesting by the circumstance, that humility was made to be the touchstone—and it was one which, from the time of Palladius and Austin to this day, has served to detect the usurpation by Rome of that kingdom which is not of this world.

Such, then, was the early independence of both our island churches, at the time of Austin’s mission to Britain; nor indeed is it possible that they could previously have acknowledged the supremacy of the Romish pontiff, for he had not usurped it himself, or as yet assumed the title of Catholic or Universal Bishop, upon which it was founded. This title was not confirmed to the pope until it was so done in the year 606, by an edict of the Emperor Phocas, (Baron. ad Ann. No. 5, &c.) It was, doubtless, assumed a short

* See also Rees’s Welch Saints, p. 311, the letter from Aldhelm to Gerutius, king of Cornwall.

time before this ; but Gregory the Great, only a few years previously, thus wrote of it in a letter to the Empress Constantia,* when it was attempted to be assumed by the Bishop of Constantinople—"It is a very lamentable thing, that he," the emperor, "should patiently permit so far, that, in contempt of all others, this my *brother* and *fellow* bishop should endeavour to be called *sole* bishop. But indeed what else is manifested in this his pride, but that the times of ANTICHRIST are nigh at hand, even now ? Because, forsooth, HE is imitated, who, scorning social bliss among legions of angels, strove to break forth to the height of singularity, saying, (Isaiah xiv. 13)—'I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven—I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the North—I will ascend above the height of the clouds—I will be like to the Most High.' "

I trust, then, that these facts will serve fully to refute the dogma of the Romanists, that "the Irish church has ALWAYS, not only acknowledged, but yielded obedience to the papal supremacy, and *from the very beginning* been closely united with Rome, through all ages up to the present time;" and that they have proved the truth of very opposite conclusions, such as forced themselves upon the minds of Ussher and our best ecclesiastical historians. "The ancient Britons," says Mosheim, (Ecc. Hist. p. 2, c. 2,) "and Scots persisted long in the maintenance of their religious liberty ; and neither the threats, nor the

* Epis. lib. iv.—See Ep. 78, and also Ep. 76, 82.

promises of the legates of Rome, could engage them to submit to the decrees and authority of the ambitious pontiff; as appears manifestly from the testimony of Bede." And Milner writes, "that attempts were made all this time, by the bishops of Rome, to induce the Irish to unite themselves to the English church"—meaning that of Austin—"but in vain." Hume also asserts, that the Irish followed the doctrines of their first teachers; and never, at the period alluded to, acknowledged any subjection to the see of Rome. I do not rely upon these writers as authorities, much less quote their opinions as facts; but surely their decided convictions should induce a reflecting people, who are early taught to respect their names, to examine well the evidence on which these convictions are founded; and not to yield too prompt an assent to the confident and contrary asseveration of a church, which they well know is neither founded, nor carried on, in essential truth.

Having broken this alleged continuance of habitual obedience to Rome, by proving its non-existence for two centuries after the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland, and demonstrated the complete independence of our church during that period, I might well stop here; for the encroachments of Rome from the commencement of the seventh century cannot be denied, while our previous liberty is unquestionable—the proof of it, therefore, is the proper position of the Protestant advocate. Yet, as doubtless our argument can be greatly strengthened, by shewing

forth that the deference for the see of Rome was of gradual growth, that it was not until the end of the twelfth century that her supremacy was fully acknowledged, and that until then the Irish church continued to be in many material respects independent and peculiar, I shall continue the chain of evidence from the era of Austin, or Gregory the Great, through the chaotic period of the transition, to that of the synod of Cashel.

Columbanus, who flourished about half a century later than Columba or Columbkille, with whom he is often confounded, was a person of much celebrity among the Irish Saints. His great missionary zeal, influence, and intelligence are testified by numerous historians, by the monasteries that he founded on the continent—especially the two great establishments of Luxeuil in Burgundy, and Bobbio in Switzerland—and by some remains of his correspondence. There are extant three letters of his writing, addressed to the Popes Greg. I. and Boniface IV., the contents of which are of the greatest importance to our subject—these epistles are relied on implicitly by the Roman Catholics, and I have already presented the tenor of the first of them to Gregory I. It is humble, and replete with veneration, but firm and independent; yet Dr. Rock has appropriated it thus—“By asking,” he says of Columbanus, “for the decisions, and calling for the judgment of the Roman pontiff, he openly acknowledged their supremacy!”—true, over the existing clergy of Gaul, but not over those for whom he claims the right, even by the canons of a

council, to observe their own independent laws and traditional customs.

The second letter of Columbanus, addressed to Pope Boniface IV., A.D. 613, on the subject of the three chapters, is written with vast deference and profound respect. The position which the Irish divine takes is, as in the case of the former letter to Gregory, that of independence, and an essential rejection of any claim to control: it therefore became him, for that very reason, to be as conciliatory as possible in his style; and he accordingly is so to an extent which, at first, appears to indicate subjection. He addresses the pontiff "as the most honoured head of the church;" yet, as Dr. Lanigan says, "when entering on the subject he writes with great freedom;" and "exhorts the Pope to assemble a council, and to remove every pretext for the imputations brought against him and his see."

This is the epistle upon which I made some comment in a former page (p. 61), where I have shewn, that St. Columbanus, in his zealous denial of schism of which the Irish church had been accused, on account of its independent conduct in relation to the above question, tempers his warmth by every degree of deferential respect that he could pay to the Roman pontiff, consistently with the truth. He tells him, in all humility—"We are the scholars of St. Peter and Paul, and of ALL disciples subscribing by the Holy Ghost the divine canon"—yet, "receiving nothing beyond the evangelic and apostolic doctrine;" in other words—we are ready to abide by the voice of

the Catholic church, notwithstanding our exemption by the above-mentioned canon ; we shall, however, bring its doctrine "to the law and to the testimony." He accordingly remonstrates with great spirit ; and calls upon the pontiff to be vigilant, and thus to avoid the repetitions of the scandals which, through the neglect of his predecessor, Vigilius, had crept in upon Christendom. He adjures him thus—"I beseech of you that, as it were with the pruning-knife (*cul-tello*) of St. Peter—that is, by a true confession of faith in a Synod, by the reprobating and anathematizing of all heretics—you should cleanse the chair of Peter from all error—*yea* horror, if any be admitted ; if not, that its purity may be acknowledged by all:" and observes that "it would be an occasion of grief and weeping, *if* the Catholic faith were not holden in an apostolical city." He tells him—"That orthodox and true Catholics are they who have never received or defended heretics, or suspected persons, but have zealously abided in the true faith." He admits that Jesus Christ had committed unto St. Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; yet warns the pontiff, "that he alone is the true bearer of these keys who opens heaven to the worthy, by the teaching of true knowledge"—"*dignis per veram scientiam*"—"and shuts it on the unworthy ;" and rebukes him for the supercilious arrogance which the possession of this great authority had tempted him to assume even in divine things—"et vos, per hoc forté, superciliosum nescio quid præ ceteris vobis majoris auctoritatis, ac in divinis rebus potestatis, vindicatis." In

fine, he tells him that the indulgence of such thoughts even will lessen his influence with the Lord ; and that he can only possess power as long as he exercises it reasonably—" tamdiu enim potestas apud vos erit, quamdiu recta ratio permanserit." Thus while, by the very position of independence that he takes, Saint Columbanus rejects the supremacy of the Papal See, he allows its high station in the Catholic church ; yet does he freely expostulate, and remind it of the supreme authority of synods, and the still higher one of the Word of God.

There is a passage in this letter which asserts, that Ireland was indebted for the Gospel to some other than the disciples of Peter and of Paul ; it is thus—" From the time in which God vouchsafed to be the Son of God ; and, riding on his two most glowing steeds, Peter and Paul, stirred up the stagnant waters of this world, and multiplied charioteers to the millions of innumerable nations, the Head Charioteer himself—namely, Christ, the true Father, the horseman of Israel—came even unto us. Since that time you (Romans) are great and illustrious with us, and Rome is made noble and renowned ; nay you are, if one may so speak, well nigh celestial with us, for the sake of Christ's two Apostles ; and Rome is the head of the churches of the world—*Saving the singular prerogative of the place of the Lord's resurrection.*" The account here given of the first importation of Christianity into Ireland is expressed in words similar to those of St. Patrick in his confession ; and, whatever it may allude to, it implies

by the context, that the first missionaries* did not come from Rome; while the latter part of the sentence unquestionably establishes our great position, that the papal see was not then of itself alone supreme over all the churches of Christendom. From the entire of this interesting epistle it is manifest that, while Columbanus concedes to the pretensions of Rome some things that might not be so readily admitted by less obsequious Protestants, he is uniform and unequivocal in declaring and exercising independence; and that is the sole question now before us.

This is the letter of Columbanus, concerning which Doctor Rock so eloquently exclaims—"in which his whole soul flashes out like lightning, and his burning words fall on our ears with the mightiness of thunderpeals;"—and which the Doctor presents, although with many important reserves, as containing "his testimony on record, in such a way that those who come after him might be able to tell the orthodoxy of ancient Ireland." The public will form a just judgment concerning it; and, if it appear manifestly to fail of affording the testimony that it is adduced by him to give, let it be remembered that there is none better to supply it. We have, indeed, to thank Doctor Rock for the candid assurance, that his party in this cause have no more material witness—"Of the fathers of the church," he says, "whether of the west or east, none of them all declares the supremacy of

* I give it abridged in the version of Mr. Foye (*Early Irish Church*, p. 67), whose useful work, published while these pages were being put up in type, occasions me to notice this passage.

the Roman pontiff, in stronger or more unequivocal language, than the Irish Saint, Columbanus."

I pass from this deferential appeal, but spirited remonstrance, which very decidedly marks the first stage of the border-land between the total and primitive independence of our native church, and its complete subjection in modern times to Rome, to that letter of St. Cummiánus junior, already referred to, which he addressed to the Abbot of Iona.

The Pope Honorius I.* and the clergy of Rome had, in the year 621, addressed an epistle to the

* I cannot omit noticing the questions of Doctor Rock upon this epistle of Honorius, contained in the fifty-third section of his letter to Lord John Manners. He asks—"Was an outcry raised among the Irish when they heard this letter from the pope? None. Did any bishop, priest, abbot, monk, or layman, step forward and protest against the *claim* thus put forth, by the pope, to interfere with them in matters belonging to *belief* and discipline?" To this I answer—there was nothing to object to in the pope's interference—no claim of his to any thing but a common Christian right to *exhort*, that they should not continue in opposition, not to his will, but to "the decrees of the bishops met in council from all parts of the world." Doctor Rock forgets that he elsewhere exhibits the matter as one *not* connected with *belief*; "the point mooted about Easter," he says (p. 80, sec. 60), "was not one of doctrine, but of discipline;" and he cannot but know that the interference, when it really occurred, did raise an outcry, and was resisted with the strongest demonstrations of party violence. "Did any one pretend," the Doctor proceeds to ask, "that Ireland lay beyond the jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff? No, not one." Now, this is the very point in dispute; and the Doctor seems to have forgotten that St. Columbanus had, in his letter to Gregory the Great, claimed for Ireland this exemption, with reference to this very question of Easter, on the ground of Ireland being without his proper jurisdiction, and on the authority of the second canon of the Council of Constantinople, already referred to.

people of Ireland ; in this letter the pontiff assumed no tone of superiority whatever : his expression is "exhortans ;" he merely *exhorts* the Irish clergy, that they would not persist in celebrating their Easter "contrary to paschal computations, and the synodal decrees of the *bishops* of the *whole world*."—(Bede, lib. ii. c. 19.) To prepare them for forming a proper decision on the subject, the inhabitants of the South of Ireland—"Gentes Scotorum quæ in Australibus Hibernicæ insulæ partibus morabantur"—despatched a deputation to Rome. Cummian informs us of the motives, the circumstances, and the results of this celebrated mission.. They need not be repeated here. The judgment of the emissaries, however, was convinced ; and, being then much struck by the unity of opinion that justly existed on the other side of the question, they advised the Southern Irish to adopt the innovation, and they did so accordingly.

The letter of Cummian breathes throughout the most decided freedom, and does not contain a sentence that admits a supremacy in Rome. It is true that the writer confers upon her the high title of the "Head of Cities"—not "Head of the Church," as Doctor Rock most unwarrantably asserts ; but this does not imply that, as the Apostolic City, she possessed a paramount authority in ecclesiastical matters ; for, as we have already seen, he expressly declares the ordinance respecting Easter to be "the canonical decree of the *fourfold* apostolic See—to wit, of Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria."

It is very remarkable that the tone of this epistle

is not only hortatory and persuasive to Segienus, but exculpatory as regards the writer himself. He is manifestly conscious that he is defending what he fears may be deemed an act of schism from the body of the Irish Church. "My fathers," he says, "it is not from any unbecoming forwardness that I presume to lay before such hallowed persons the words of this my exculpation, but from an earnest desire to stand excused with you ; calling God to witness to my soul, that it is not from any contempt of you, or pride in mine own wisdom, or any slighting the wisdom of others, that I have, with other wise persons, adopted the solemnity of the Paschal festival." Such is the strain in which he addresses the monks of Iona ; and, while he calls for arguments, he observes to them, if they possess none—"hold your peace, and forbear to call us heretics ;" he also says—"What more grievous than to say of mother church, 'Rome errs, Jerusalem errs, Alexandria errs, Antioch errs, the whole world errs ; the Scots and the bishops alone think right.'" Pregnant words—which, while they repeat the fourfold character of the ancient mother church, imply that Ireland was practically independent of even that supremacy, which was then acknowledged in the Western Church, but was not as yet acquiesced in by the stubborn descendants of the Eastern branch of Christendom.

After that Rome had obtained the acquiescence of the Irish in the South, we find that the popes began to assume, in their epistles, a tone more sounding of authority. John IV., accordingly, when pope elect,

wrote thus to the Irish prelates and clergy, in A.D. 640—"We found that certain persons of your province are trying to renew a fresh heresy out of an old one, refuting with a cloudy darkness our pasch, and striving to celebrate it on the fourteenth moon with the Jews." Dr. Rock (see p. 70, 75, &c.) is correct in saying of this fresh heresy—"That not the whole of that people, but some only among them, were involved in it;" but, returning to the first letter from Rome, he adds—"No sooner was the decree from Honorius made known in Ireland, than a quick and willing obedience was paid it." This fact was not so; and, even admitting it to be true, as the Doctor asserts, that "whatever opposition the papal mandate met with in the north, in reality, *arose and spread* from one single spot—St. Columbkille's, in the Island of Iona"—the resistance was obstinate and general. It was long-continued also; for we know that it was stoutly and decidedly manifested at the Synod of Whitby in 664, and maintained most pertinaciously in Iona, for half a century more; while the kindred church of the Britons stood out in their method of observance until the year 809. (Uss. Religion, &c., p. 114.)

In the seventh century a remarkable degeneracy was exhibited in the Irish Church, arising very much from her growing deference to Rome. This degeneracy had commenced some time before, and is noticed in a curious relic already quoted, and which is commented on by Dr. Lanigan, in these words (Vol. II. p. 13)—"This catalogue of Irish saints has been pub-

lished by Ussher, (p. 913, &c.), and is a very interesting document, throwing great light on our ancient ecclesiastical history. Even Ledwich admits (*Antiq.* p. 415,) that it is extremely valuable. It bears every mark of high antiquity, and was probably drawn up some time before the disputes about the paschal cycle and tonsure had totally subsided, which was not until about the year 710." It cannot, however, be entirely relied on: its contradictions, in some points, to other authorities, prevent its implicit reception; yet is it of much value, as we can, at least, draw from it an impartial testimony to the independence of the primitive national church, while it exhibits a true picture of its rapid decline. It relates that the "first order of Catholic saints" had one head, Christ, and one leader, Patrick—one mass, one uniform liturgy, one mode of tonsure, (from ear to ear) and one method of celebrating Easter. Now, as confessedly none of these were Roman, the primitive Irish Church, under its first order of holiest men, exhibited, in its unity and unanimity, complete independence of foreign supremacy. Its head was Christ—its one leader, Patrick. This continued from A.D. 431 to A.D. 542—above one hundred years. The second order is represented as admitting a variety of liturgies and monastic rules, but still adhering to the eastern tonsure and ancient paschal computation; it continued till A.D. 598. The third order, which continued till A.D. 665, is described as having different rules, and masses, and tonsure, and Easters, and so forth. We have in these two last a faithful acknow-

ledgment of the introduction of divisions into our nation and church. These new doctrines, it is quite manifest, were imported from Rome; while the unity and independence on which they infringed, is intimately blended with eastern customs, and with St. Patrick. The limit of disorganization is remarkably fixed to that very period, that synchronizes with the first formal acknowledgment of papal supremacy by a British monarch, at the synod of Whitby.

This very curious MS. presents to us a gradual deterioration in ecclesiastical discipline from the time of St. Patrick. Of these orders he says thus—*“Primus ordo sanctissimus, secundus ordo sanctior, tertius sanctus; primus sicut sol ardescit, secundus sicut luna, tertius sicut stellæ.”* “The first order was most holy, the second holier, the third holy; the first shines as the sun, the second as the moon, the third as the stars.”

I cannot pass from this period of paschal controversy, without observing, that it affords us a most instructive lesson. It exhibits the artful manner in which popery blended itself with truth, when it first presented itself as a candidate for acceptance in our island; it shews how the trifle thus reasonably demanded, and at length conceded, was but the fine point of the wedge which was afterwards to be struck home with progressive and destructive power. The surrender of our independence being virtually sealed by this apparently indifferent act, the encroachments of Roman dominancy, in doctrine as well as discipline, became awfully rapid; very easy, indeed, was

the descent into error, and nothing but the remoteness of the island, and the increasing difficulties of intercourse between Ireland and Italy, prevented the old religion from being completely swallowed up in the apostacy. Let us take warning from this history; what Rome was, she is still, and will be to the end. The inundations of the Danish hordes, which swept away all that was civilized in Erin, and especially her colleges and records, succeeded; yet, strange to say, they contributed perhaps to keep away some of the encroachments of foreign influence for a season; and, by preventing the new leaven from quietly working in native seminaries, secured some liberty to the exercise of tradition and custom. Certain it is, that the principle of original independence did not cease to influence the native Church, until it was at length substantially checked by the jealous energies of Malachy and of his synods; and soon after entirely neutralized, by the combined interference of the arms of the British monarchy, and the bulls of the Anglo-Roman Pontiff.

The case of these mediæval instances has been discussed in a work which has been published later than the pamphlet of Doctor Rock, and is entitled, "The Church of St. Patrick—an historical inquiry into the independence of the ancient Church of Ireland," by Mr. Todd.* He combats well the asser-

* The author professes to be the first, after Ussher, to examine the grounds of this assertion historically—yet, even while quoting Dr. Phelan's pamphlet of Declan (p. 38), he is inclined to think that Patrick did visit Rome; and that "his mission appears to have been sanctioned by Celestine!"

tions of the Doctor, respecting the four "ordinary ways in which," as Mr. Todd remarks, "the Pope manifests his supremacy over distant churches," which are these—"occasional consecrations of their metropolitan and other prelates, confirming the election of their bishops and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, sanctioning missions, and hearing appeals;"—to refer to his facts and reasonings will suffice here. In Dr. O'Connor's letters of Columbanus, and in other controversial works, will be found abundant proofs, that the Popes had not yet, by legates and palls, canonization of saints, oaths or dispensations, visitations, indulgences, tributes, or any mark of ecclesiastical authority, established their claim to supremacy in Ireland. To all these I shall confidently refer. .

Dr. Phelan, in his "Policy of the Church of Rome in Ireland," page 48, makes a just remark, grounded on historical facts; he says—"the discipline of the Irish Church had *so little cor-*

pass by this as mere matter of opinion, though it is an opinion but little calculated to promote the object of his inquiry: but I think it quite necessary to warn some among our readers, of the injurious effect, upon the truth of the main question, that may proceed from the following remark concerning the character of our ancient Church—"It did not keep out of view the theory of the Church, nor estimate otherwise than it ought, the divine authority of the ministerial orders, or the sacred power of the keys." The reader will recollect that, although a regular ministerial succession forms the very essence of Colman's argument at Whitby, he rejects in it any exclusive connexion of his Church with the "sacred power of the keys"—this he leaves to the Roman advocate, in whose mouth we first find it used. St. Columbanus, indeed, the tractarian of his age, admits this claim of St. Peter's chair; although in a manner, as we have seen, different from modern Romanists.

respondence with the Roman, that it received several hard names from the Papal Church of the 12th century—Pope Alexander and Cambrensis call it *filthy*; Anselm and Gilbert, *schismatical*; Bernard, *barbarous*, and almost *Pagan*."

From these expressions of the Romanists, and others of a quite contrary bearing, which were resorted to when conciliation was convenient, I would deduce two arguments, to prove that the Church of Ireland did, until the 12th century, practically exercise its functions in a manner quite independent of Rome. This is to be clearly deduced, in the first place, from the mode in which its conduct has been animadverted on by the jealous adherents of the papal see. It has been uniformly stiled, by them, *schismatical*, and even *heretical*; not only in later days, and after the Danish corruptions, when her discipline became thoroughly relaxed, but even before that period, when Ionas, the biographer of Columbanus, bears witness to Ireland, as a nation which, "although without such laws as govern other people, flourished in the vigour of Christian doctrine, so as to exceed the faith of the neighbouring nations." This stigma was attempted to be attached to her on the very first mission of Palladius, as if it were to believers in Christ, "but not rightly." Again, a Romanist historian, in recording the case of the three chapters in 553, ranks the Irish with the *schismatics*. Columbanus, a few years after, vindicate them from the current charges of heresy and schism, and declares them to have been never liable

to the just imputation of either. Wilfred, in 664, accuses them of schism ; excusing them, at the same time, on account of their ignorance and remoteness from Rome ; and he refused to receive ordination as a bishop from their prelates. (Uss. Religion, p. 106, &c.) Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, in 670, exhibited his opinion of the anti-papal character of the Irish Church, in an unequivocal manner, as it is recorded by Bede ; this was, by requiring that all who were consecrated bishops by the Irish or British prelates, should again be consecrated, or confirmed, by those of Rome. Passing by other instances in darker times, at length we find the entire papal party, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries—popes and legates, prelates and writers—lavish in their abuse of the Irish Church, as not only filthy and barbarous, but schismatic and scarcely pagan—and why is all this ? Simply because the customs of our native church impugned the ambition and the avarice of Rome. I will not deny that some good men might have been influenced by better motives—to revive decayed discipline, to cut off rotten members, and such like, when, in later times, a deterioration really existed—but we cannot forget the dominion arrogated, and the Peter's pence coveted, by the worldly pontiffs, and that it was the combined election and succession of primates that called down the heavy censure of St. Bernard. The entire, therefore, of this jealous nomenclature, before a decay in practice as well as after it, indicates a perfect consciousness, in the minds of the Romanist partizans, that “the

discipline of the Irish Church *had little correspondence with Rome*—that, in fact, it was practically, and at all times, independent of that see.

To take this in another point of view—the Irish, who are stigmatized with these hard names by some, are treated with respect by others, as if possessing those marks in the constitution of their church, which stamped upon it a difference from Rome, but which, although erroneous, it had a prescriptive title to enjoy. Thus, at a very early period, Gregory I. (A.D. 592) sent to all the bishops in Ireland the book which his predecessor, Pope Pelagius, wrote on the question of the three chapters, requesting of them to study it, and seeking to *persuade* them to unity upon the subject—“*charitatem vestram admoneo*”—and Honorius, as we have seen, some few years after, *exhorted*, not commanded, the same clergy to celebrate their Easter after the manner of all others. Thus, Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, in his letter to Turlogh, king of Ireland, A.D. 1081, requests of him to assemble a synod, to correct the abuses of his church, and, in other words, to assimilate it more to Rome; acknowledging thus the independence both of his kingdom and his church. In like manner Anselm, the successor of Lanfranc, repeats the same advice, and by doing so makes a similar admission.* Thus Henry II. himself, and

* It is impossible to exhibit this by stronger terms than those used by Anselm—“*Precor, obsecro, et consulo, sicut ille quem valde diligo,*” &c. ; “*quatenus consilio bonorum virorum et sapientium regni vestri corrigere studiat.*”

the pope Adrian IV., found it necessary to have recourse to a great national synod at Cashel; in order that there, by universal *consent*, the ancient discipline should be changed; and the Irish, by its merger in the Anglican Church, made from thenceforth entirely to conform with that of Rome. Thus also, most particularly, the life and acts of the celebrated primate Malachy, as related by his biographer the more celebrated St. Bernard, a Romanist of the highest intelligence and credit, affords us this species of evidence. With a detail of the events connected with this prelate's journey to Rome, events which greatly prepared the way for the acts of the synod, we may properly conclude this history of Ireland's freedom in her native church.

— The Primate Celsus had enjoined upon his dying bed, that the staff of St. Patrick should be delivered to Malachy, declaring him his successor in the metropolitan see of Armagh. At this period, about A.D. 1146, the Irish Church was in a state of great disorder; and Malachy found it also replete with ancient and peculiar usages, so numerous and uncatholic, that he resolved to visit Rome himself, and apply for a remedy to the sovereign pontiff. The difficulties attending such a journey in that age—fatal indeed to Malachy in a second attempt—attest his zeal; and this again bears witness to the importance, in his estimation, of the occasion. It was not the correction of modern neglects—these he might, with the co-operation of the other bishops, have easily rectified, without the special interference of the Pope,

and many of them were so ; but it was, as the sequel demonstrates, the deeply imbibed taint of antiquated peculiarity, which required the most powerful influences of his holiness to remove. This consisted chiefly in the number of bishops, and their mode of appointment, which was altogether without reference to Rome,—“from which cause arose that universal dissolution of ecclesiastical discipline, that disregard of censure, and decay of religion in Ireland.”* The number of these, Bernard complains, was multiplied according to the pleasure of the metropolitan—a custom, according to O’Halloran, (Vol. II. p. 7.) “practised by St. Patrick and his successors, to the great advantage and increase of Christianity.” There were many other things wrong, which did not, however, require the high power of the pontiff to alter ; for Malachy had previously and of his own authority corrected some of them. Thus, as Bernard informs us, he, “*of the new*, instituted the most wholesome use of confession, the sacrament of confirmation, and the contract of marriage—all of which they,” the Irish, “were ignorant of, or did neglect”—that is, he introduced these as sacraments of the church ; for it is not to the mere rite of marriage that St. Bernard alludes, since he tells us, in this same book, that this was duly practised among them.

* “A most pernicious custom had been established by the diabolical ambition of some men in power, of getting possession of the seat of St. Patrick by hereditary succession ; nor would they permit any to be elected bishops who were not of their own sept and family, for fifteen bishops of the same blood had successively governed this church.”

It is very worthy of remark, by the way, how many are the variances of discipline in the Irish Church from that of Rome, that are recorded in this authentic record of St. Bernard, and in the genuine works and letters of cotemporary Romanists—variances that could not, for the most part, have crept in, but were coeval with the first planting of the Gospel in Ireland, and had grown with its growth. We have noticed the great discrepancies connected with the episcopal order—the number, the appointment of bishops; we have seen that the use of confession, confirmation, and marriage, as sacraments, was unknown—these were instituted anew; and two centuries before, we are told, by Alcuin, the preceptor of Charlemagne, that none of the laity in Ireland would “make his confession to a priest.” Bernard also testifies to the marriage of the clergy, even that of the Primate Celsus, A.D. 1089—“*more gentis suæ*”—as it is said in an ancient M.S. in the library of Dublin College (C. i. 26.). He also tells us of the Primate’s irregularity in the actual erection of a bishop’s see into an archbishopric, and this without a pall from Rome; and of his nominating Malachy as his successor—a nomination that was by no means amended, so as to suit the orthodox taste of Bernard, by his putting this succession into the old and customary course of election, and by his writing to the monarchs, Mortagh and Domhnal, requesting “that they would use their influence and authority to confirm his nomination.” To this catalogue of abominations might be added that old one, “that infants

were baptized without a consecrated chrism," as Lanfranc in his letter complains ; and also that of no less ancient origin, and which had just given an occasion to the legate Gillebertus, for the writing of his book, "*de uso Ecclesiastico*," against the various masses and liturgy of the Irish clergy, all of them differing from, and exclusive of, that of Rome.

But to return to Malachy's journey. I shall extract St. Bernard's account of it, as it appears in the version of Dr. Rock (p. 115.) "It seemed to him, that it would not be sufficiently safe to take any steps in this business, without the authority of the apostolic see ; he therefore resolved on going to Rome, and chiefly because the use of the pall—the fulness of honour—was still, and *had from the beginning*, been wanting to the metropolitan see. Besides this, there was another metropolitan see, that of Cashel—"for this also did Malachy wish to get the pall ; and to have its prerogative, *which it had acquired from the beneficence of Celsus*, confirmed to it by the authority of the apostolic see. For Malachy, wishful for every holy rite, not one of which he would have had his countrymen deprived of, much regretted that up to that time Ireland never had the pall."

"There was then in the apostolic chair, Pope Innocent II. of happy memory, who graciously received him ; and, on Malachy's preparing to go back home, commissioned him to act in his stead, by appointing him legate over the whole of Ireland. After this, Malachy asked to have the election of the new metropolitan see confirmed, and

palls to be given him for both bishoprics. As for the confirmation he immediately got that privilege; 'but for the palls,' said the Roman pontiff, 'it becometh to act with greater solemnity. *Having called together the bishops, the clergy, the chief men of the country, you must hold a general council; and thus, by the connivance and common wish of all, you must ask through worshipful persons for the pall, and it shall be granted to you.*' Moreover the pope taking off the mitre from his own head, put it on Malachy's; and he gave him a stole and maniple, which he was accustomed to wear when he offered up [the sacrifice]; and then, saluting him with a holy kiss of peace, he sent him away, upheld by the apostolic blessing and authority."

There are many striking circumstances that must occur to every attentive reader of this story. The first of these is the vast importance of the occasion; it was not, as I have already said, the mere cleansing and restoring of a corrupted church from the defilements it had acquired from neglect—it was the introducing of a radical change into the very constitution of one long established, independent, and even adverse in its principles to that of Rome. Again, there is the sending hither of the pall from the Pope, that great badge of archiepiscopal investiture, under the supremacy of that pontiff—I do believe with Archbishop Ussher, that the title had for several centuries been known in Ireland; but it was not a Roman, but an independent dignity in the church, and was holden in this island without papal appoint-

ment or approbation. In the third place, there is manifested, on the part of Innocent, the greatest satisfaction, on account of this voluntary offer of subjection on the part of the Irish primate. "He well knew," says O'Halloran, "that hitherto the Irish nation paid these small dues called Peter's pence to the see of Armagh, which the rest o. Europe paid to Rome"—(another most important evidence, by the way, of its independence of that see)—but, still further, he hailed the offer of a peaceful acquiescence in his entire supremacy; and he shrewdly closed with the occasion, so fairly presented, of a national acknowledgment of it. But, especially, we cannot but perceive that the Pope felt quite conscious that a movement so material, so comprehensive, so fundamental, ought not, nay could not, be constitutionally made by any individual authority, however high; but that, to secure its permanency and universality, the sanction of a great and general council, composed of the usual constituents of such assemblies in Ireland, the great men as well as the clergy, was requisite. He sends back Malachy, therefore, armed with ample powers to convene one, which he accordingly did without delay.

The council was holden early in 1148, at Holmpatrick. Among other things, Malachy, who as legate presided, was commissioned to return with full authority to Rome. The prelate immediately set forth on his journey, but never returned; he died at Clairvaux on his way. Pope Eugenius III., however, in the year 1151, transmitted the four palls to

Ireland, by the hands of Cardinal Paparo, his apostolic legate ; and the cardinal delivered them to the four metropolitans at the celebrated synod of Kells, holden by him in March, 1152. This assembly, over which the papal resident legate, Christian, Bishop of Lismore, presided, and which was attended by twenty-four Irish prelates, was entirely national. We learn from the annalists, says Doctor Rock, "that princes, and kings, and crowds of Irish nobility went there, and that altogether there was no smaller number than 3,000 ecclesiastics present." The occasion for holding it was, indeed, important, and the consequences most material ; for the popish supremacy, in its fulness, was virtually confirmed by the receiving of the palls, and some remaining traces of Eastern connection were removed, by reducing the number of bishopricks. I have already shewn that one prompt result of its measures was, to merge fifteen sees in that of Meath, and to convert them into rural deaneries.

But still much remained to be done, and much that was heterodox in church government to be removed. Bishops, for instance, were still appointed by election.—In truth, it was not until the year 1206, when Egan M'Gillivider was nominated primate by the Pope, (Ware's Bishops and Columbanus's fifth letter, p. 43), that any instance of appointment by papal provision occurred in Ireland ; and this was on the opportunity that presented itself to that pontiff for interfering in the decision of a contested election. Even so the attempt was resisted, and this too by the dastardly

John ; whose acquiescence was meanly purchased, by the payment of three hundred marks of silver, and three of gold. So very difficult was it to root out the principle of independence in this material matter—it exhibited here all that continuity for which oriental customs are remarkable, and which time only serves to strengthen, but not destroy.

We perceive then how it became necessary, with such strong prejudices opposed against the principles of the papacy, for Adrian, the reigning Pope, to act with vigor. He was well seconded by the obsequiousness and ambition of Henry, in these his strenuous efforts “to advance the interests of religion in Ireland”—that is, to extend over this “barbarous nation” the wings of Romanism—affording it thus “such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them.” It was peculiarly requisite, in order to fix the principle of papal dominancy upon the broadest and most secure basis, that a synod should be holden armed with the fullest power, and exercising the most ample authority ; which should, by one comprehensive law, convey all possible heterodoxies, latent or apparent, that already existed or might yet spring up, into one absorbing cesspool, where the principle of assimilation might at once put into action all its destructive and regenerating powers. With this view, the celebrated Synod of Cashel was convened, and there, “at one fell swoop,” it was unanimously declared—that “for the future, in all parts of the Church of Ireland, the divine service, *after the likeness of most holy church,*

is to be done according to what the Anglican church observeth"—“*Quod omnia divina, ad instar sacrosanctæ ecclesiæ, juxta quod Anglicana observat ecclesia, in omnibus partibus ecclesiæ (Hiberniæ) amodo tractentur.*” (Cambr. Hib. Expur, lib. I. c. 33, 34.) In other words, let the independence of the Irish church be now at length annihilated for ever. From all that has been here detailed it will appear, that there is sufficient to justify the Protestants in attributing to this synod so much importance; and that Doctor Rock has no just warrant whatsoever for undervaluing this decree. Is it not manifest that it established the Roman Catholic religion here, to all the extent in which it then existed in England? and is it not equally clear, that all the manœuvres that led to it, and all the circumstances connected with them, demonstrate beyond a doubt, that up to the time at which it passed, Ireland retained traces of her original independence, so strong that every possible effort was required to efface them?

It may be interesting, in conclusion, to remark, and useful to shew, as a proof of the long-continued vitality of the primitive church in this island, that even after its apparent extinction, and much subsequently to the Synod of Cashel, some sparks still remained living in the embers, which occasionally emitted not only a faint momentary, but even a continued light. It, would, however, lead me too far from the simple object of this work, were I to enlarge upon this part of the subject: but the Irish were not a people that could be easily driven from their national

predilections, at the will of their British masters; and Doctor Lanigan distinctly declares, that, wherever they preserved their independence, the clergy and people looked only to their own ecclesiastical rules, as if the Synod of Cashel had never been held. (Vol. iv. p. 217.)

We have an instance of this jealousy of their liberty existing among our hierarchy, that occurred just before the synod of Cashel. It is related by Ussher, that the sending of the bishops of Dublin to the Primate of England for consecration, produced a strong sensation. "Know you for verity," is the expression of a letter from the people of Dublin to that prelate, "that the bishops of Ireland have great indignation towards us, and the bishop most of all that dwelleth at Armagh, because we will not obey their ordination, but will always be under your government." (Relig. of Anc. Irish. p. 85.) Much later, in the year 1484, Pope Innocent by a bull established the collegiate church of Galway; and he tells us in it, that it is for the spiritual uses of civilized citizens, whose customs differed from the Irish, who were for ever disturbing them from receiving "the holy sacraments according to the *English decency*"—(Hardiman's Galway, App.); and when Cardinal Wolsey, as pope's legate, sent over a supply of bulls and dispensations to Ireland, he was informed that they were but little sought for there, as the Irish "questioned his grace's authority in Ireland, especially outside the pale." (Cox, p. 212.)

Indeed the tracts of Dr. O'Connor, published under the name of Columbanus, exhibit the truth of this "fond adherence," so much in character with the genuine Hibernian. I have already quoted his authority (p. 82,) to show that the custom of electing bishops existed among the native Irish, even to this our time;—"usque ad nostra tempora"—together with his caution to them not to permit this their ancient right to be taken from them—"ab uno enim passu facile progreditur ad alium."

Sufficient has now been said, without dwelling more upon modern instances, to establish the negative to this proposition of Dr. Rock, that "the Irish Church has ALWAYS not only acknowledged, but yielded obedience, to the papal supremacy; and, *from its very beginning*, been closely united with Rome, *through all ages*, up to the present time." It may be useful at this period to repeat, and particularly to urge the fact—that all the seditious clamour that now labours to couple the name of Saxon with that of heretic, is founded in essential falsehood; and that it was at the same period with the English dynasty, and chiefly through its instrumentality, and the exertions of the only Englishman that ever was sovereign pontiff of Rome, that the religion of popery was finally established by legal acknowledgment in Ireland.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE ANCIENT IRISH AT VARIANCE WITH THOSE OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

Having proved that the fundamental doctrine of papal supremacy was not holden at all by the pri-

mitive church of Ireland, in its earliest centuries, or with entire and unbroken dependence since the period when it was first admitted, I proceed to notice a third dogma of Doctor Rock; which, as far as concerns our island, is thus expressed (p. 6)—“That this Irish Church has ever held, *neither more nor less* than that very same religious belief, taught by the now reigning Pope Gregory XVI.” But as Doctor Rock has promised us, “very shortly,” a separate notice on this interesting subject, it would be obviously premature in me to discuss it here—especially as I have already done so in a work entitled “Religion of the Ancient Irish Saints before A.D. 600.” I shall, therefore, exhibit a very few extracts of Roman Catholic authorities, chiefly taken from that publication, from which this at least will be manifest—that the Irish Church did not hold that absolute identity of religious belief with the reigning Pope,—the “*neither more nor less*” than is now taught by him, and which is with such confidence challenged for it on the part of Rome.

The present pontiff, Greg. XVI., has sent forth an encyclical letter, bearing date May 8, 1844, containing the following passages, among many similar—“We confirm and renew the decrees, delivered in former times by apostolic authority, against the publication, distribution, reading, and possession of books of the Holy Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue.” The letter is long, I must be contented to refer to it; and it is notorious that its spirit is quite at variance with that which I shall now proceed to exhibit.

From the genuine works of St. Patrick, we find that he refers to no other ground of doctrine, but "it is written"—there is not in them a trace of any other authority being adduced, or relied on. With respect to his own practice, even Jocelin (c. xii.) informs us, that he exercised himself much in the reading of the Scriptures, "*ab ipso primævo pubertatis,*" "from the very earliest age of puberty." Of St. Columbkille, also, we are told, by his biographer Adamnanus (lib. i. c. 1), that he was one—"qui etiam a puero deditus Christiano tyrocinio et sapientiæ studiis"—"who, *even from his boyhood,* was given to a Christian education, and the studies of wisdom." "Fortunately," says the Rev. Mr. Carew (Ecc. Hist., p. 352), "for Columbanus, his master was ardently devoted to the study of the Sacred Scriptures;" and he tells us also of St. Finian, the celebrated founder of the great seminary at Clonard, "that for seven years after his return, he employed himself in the study of the Sacred Scriptures, and instructing others in the knowledge of them"—an excellent model for modern national education. A remarkable fact is still further told us by Bede (lib. iv. 23, Stapleton's translations) of St. Hilda, abbess of Lindisfarne, that such "religious men as lived under her government, *she* made to bestow their time in the reading of the Scriptures." Again, this venerable historian relates of St. Aidan, the principal of St. Columbkille's successors, that "*all* such as went with him, *whether clergy or laity,* were obliged to exercise themselves either in reading the Scriptures, or in the learning of the Psalms by heart." (Hist. lib. iii. c. 5 and 26.)

But it would be manifest waste of time were I to enlarge upon the ancient character of Ireland in this respect, even from the time of St. Chrysostom, who wrote thus about the year 400—"Although thou shouldest go to the ocean and those British isles," &c., "thou shouldest hear all men, every where, discursing matters out of the Scriptures, with another voice indeed, but not with another faith"—(De util. Scrip. Ed. Sav. V. viii. p. 3)—and so through those subsequent centuries, during which Ireland established her fame as an island full of holy men, who "observed only those works of piety and charity, which they could learn in the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolical writings."—(Bede iii. 4.)

It is scarcely necessary to add, that all this is adverse, both in principle and in practice, to the precepts inculcated in the circular letter of Gregory XVI.; and, as I have so often, and in a connection not much to his credit, made mention of a wise pontiff, his predecessor, and the first of his name, who was styled "the great," I think it but just to redeem his character somewhat, by transcribing the following most beautiful passage from his works. It is contained in a letter addressed to Leo, Archbishop of Seville—"As the Word of God contains mysteries capable of exercising the most discerning mind, so it includes truths fit to nourish the most simple and ignorant. It carries on its surface wherewithal to nourish its children, and keeps in its recesses that which may wrap in admiration the most exalted minds; being like a river broad and deep, in which

a lamb may walk, or an elephant can swim." This was written at the end of the sixth century. More than twelve have separated the reigns of the two Gregories; the difference between the teachings of their several epistles can only be duly estimated in eternity.

But to the religious belief taught by the reigning pontiff we are referred for a sample of that holden in the ancient Irish Church. At first there seems to be some difficulty attached to an appeal thus made to the opinions of an individual, as if it were possible to ascertain them with certainty and with precision; but this difficulty entirely vanishes, when we recollect the unchangeable unity of faith that distinguishes the Roman Catholic Church, and that the Catechism of the Council of Trent must be assented to by all its members, under the penalty of anathema, and of incurring, not only "*indignationem omnipotentis Dei*," but also "*beatorum Petri et Paulo, apostolorum ejus*"—not only the anger of the Almighty, but of his apostles Peter and Paul. (See Creed of Pius IV.) The decrees of that council, therefore, present us with the religious belief of Pope Gregory XVI.; let us examine whether or not it agree in the most material—the fundamental principle of all—with that of our early Irish Church. And let us remember, that any one instance of comparison will suffice us to establish the truth, or otherwise, of the "neither more nor less" agreement between them, that is asserted in the dogma now under consideration.

The Council of Trent declares, (Trid. Sess. vi.

Can. 11, &c.)—"If any one say that men are justified, either by the sole imputed righteousness of Christ, or the sole remission of sins, exclusive of the grace and charity which should be shed in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and remain in them; *or likewise that the grace by which we be justified is the MERE FAVOR OF GOD*—let him be anathema." And again—"If any one shall say, that the good works of a justified man are so the gifts of God, that they are not *also* the good merits of the justified man himself; or that the justified man himself, by good works, which, through the grace of God and the merit of Christ, are done by him, does not truly MERIT an increase of grace—*eternal life*—and, if he depart in grace, the possession of eternal life, and also an increase of glory—let him be accursed."

We shall now examine the views of St. Patrick. In the Epistle to Coroticus, and his confession, he writes thus: "I was as a stone which lies in the deep mire; and he who is mighty came, and took me out of it in his mercy; and he indeed raised me up, and placed me on the top of the wall." (Opusc. p. 5.) "But what shall I say, or what shall I promise unto my Lord? because I see nothing that he has not bestowed upon me." (p. 21.) And again—"I am greatly A DEBTOR TO GOD, who has vouchsafed to me so much grace, that so many people should be born unto God, through me." (Opusc. p. 14.) Once more—"Behold, I now commend my soul to my most faithful God, whose ambassador I am, in my great unworthiness"—"in ignobilitate

meâ.” (pp. 21 and 28.) “Non sum dignus Deo neque hominibus subvenire”—“I am unworthy to assist either God or man.” And all the genuine works of St. Patrick are but comments on the following text, which he himself most forcibly proposes thus—“These are not my words, but those of God, and the apostles, and the prophets, that have never lied—‘He who believeth shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’”—(Opusc. p. 30.)

St. Paul, in writing to the Christian Church of Rome in his day, says (Romans iii. 20–24, 27, 28) that—“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe ; for there is no difference ; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Where is boasting then ? It is excluded. By what law ?—of works ? Nay ; but by the law of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” These extracts may for the present suffice ; and we may be assured that, in agreeing with St. Patrick, according to this doctrine of St. Paul, we are in no danger of incurring either Paul’s indignation, or that of the Apostle Peter who taught the same things, let the creed of Pope Pius denounce as it will.

This view of doctrine was not lost in Ireland so late as the ninth century ; for, in the year 818, we find it to be thus opened out in the commentary of the celebrated Sedulius :—

“ All mankind stood condemned in the apostatical root (of Adam), with so just and divine a judgment, that even were none of them freed from thence, no man could rightly blame the justice of God ; and such as were freed must have been so freed, that from the many that were not freed, but left in their most just condemnation, it might be manifested what the whole lump had deserved. That also the due judgment of God had condemned even those that are justified, *unless* mercy had relieved them from that which was due ; that every mouth of those who gloried in their *merits* might be stopped, and he that glorieth should glory in the Lord.” (In Rom. ix.)—“ God hath so ordered it, that he will be gracious to mankind, if they do believe that they are to be freed by the blood of Christ.” (In Rom. iii.)—“ And the patriarchs and the prophets were not justified by the works of the law, but by faith.” (In Gal. ii.)—And lastly—“ This faith, when it hath been justified, sticks in the soil of the soul, like a root that hath received a shower ; that, when it hath begun to be cultivated by the law of God, boughs may rise up again on it, which may bear the fruit of works—*Therefore the root of righteousness doth not grow out of works, but the fruit of works from the root of righteousness.*”—(In Rom. iv.)

I shall conclude this very brief notice of the te-

nets of modern Roman Catholics with one more; selected not for its importance, but because of some remarkable particulars connected with it—I mean the celibacy of the clergy. I have no doubt that the reigning pontiff could never countenance doctrines which permitted the priest Potitus, or the deacon Calphurnius—the grandfather and father of St. Patrick—to enter into wedlock; and yet we must presume it of them, or suppose him to have been of doubly illegitimate birth. It is singular enough, that a fact relating to the first Gregory of Rome exhibits, by another example, the essential changes which time has wrought in the Church of Rome, in the course of twelve centuries; for we read in Bede, (Eccl. Hist. II. 1.) that Gregory’s great grandfather was Pope Felix, his predecessor in the Apostolic See—“Felix, ejusdem sedis Apostolicæ quondam Episcopus, fuit atavus.” What does Pope Gregory XVI. think of this?—does it agree *neither more nor less* with his present doctrines?

But to return to the customs of our island in this particular, I shall repeat very shortly, that in Ireland, even so late as the eleventh and twelfth centuries, in the very see of Armagh, “the primacy passed to the chief of the sept, as a kind of inheritance, for fifteen generations.” Thus, Amalgaid, who was Primate in the year 1021, was father to two bishops of that see. We have seen that Celsus, bishop of Armagh, who died A.D. 1129, was a married man; the eight primates who preceded him were also married.

I have thus put together some scattered members

of our early church, several of them taken from the monuments of Romanist antiquity; we find them there preserved in their original truth, although clothed with the fictions of Rome's middle age, and tinted with suitable colouring by modern legend. The subject is vastly important and interesting; and I trust that it may be followed up by many, with more learning and more power, more leisure and more talent, than I possess. To conclude, the closer we examine into the now venerated antiquities of papal doctrines and practice, the nearer shall we find them to resemble the dry and mouldy loaves, by the production of which the Gibeonites would fain have persuaded the people of Israel, that they came "from a very far country"—(Josh. ix. 9,) and discover them to be comparatively modern in their invention, and entirely insidious in their object.

APPENDIX.

I.

INTRODUCTION.—PAGE 17.

SHORT extracts from an address, which, with splendid copies of the “*Biblia Sacra Polyglotta Bagsteriana*” in eight languages, the “*Liturgia Britannica Octaglotta*,” the “*Irish Bible*,” and “*Irish Prayer Book*,” was presented by Irish Teachers (178 in number) of the Kingscourt district, to the author, as Secretary of the Irish Society for instructing the people through the medium of their native tongue, on his visiting Kingscourt, in November, 1845 :—

“HONOURED SIR,—Deputed by our brethren, teachers in connexion with the Kingscourt branches of the Irish Society, we embrace this opportunity of your visiting us, to offer, in their name and our own, an humble tribute of respectful attachment to your person, and to express the grateful feelings of our hearts for your long and unwearied exertions in the cause of Scriptural Education for the Native Irish.

“From your little volume, entitled, ‘*The Catholic Religion*,’ we know, on authority incontrovertible, that Ireland was connected with the ancient Catholic Church long before her subjection to Rome ; we are now convinced that *Romanism is a heresy and a novelty*, and that, by our secession from the Roman, and adhesion to the Irish Catholic Church, we have merely thrown off the unscriptural excrescences

of the Trent modern Council, and returned to the pure, ancient, and scriptural Church of our Fathers.

“ Though persecution and anathema deter many from uniting with us, still the Irish Bible and the Irish School have raised up intelligent men, who will not be prevented from reading the Holy Scriptures. These men know, that for centuries past their brethren in Ireland, speaking the Irish language exclusively, have been allowed to live and to die without the Scriptures in their own tongue; they know that the Church of Rome until this day, has not provided a translation of the Scriptures in Irish—they know, if it had not been for the Irish Society, they themselves must have been as the neglected generations departed. They feel, then, most grateful to you, and to the Committee of the Irish Society, for Irish Schools and the Irish Bible. They have it—they are reading it—they will read it, and hand it down to their children’s children as the most valuable gift that Ireland ever received.

“ Signed in behalf of ourselves, and our fellow-teachers, &c. &c.”

II.

PAGE 84.

THE first occurrence of the name “ Culdee ” is in the *Topographia* of Giraldus Cambrensis, (*Distinc.* 2, c. 4, p. 716,) he there writes thus :—“ *Est lacus Momoniâ Boreali duas continens insulas, unam majorem, alteram minorem. Major ecclesiam habet antiquæ religionis, minor vero capellam cui pauci cœlibes, quos cœlicolas vel Colideos vocant, devoté deserviunt.* ” The passage is remarkable—it is to be implied from it that the Culdees were not of the ancient religion of the country, and that celibacy was not a mark of it; this also is manifest, and most worthy of attention, that, at the time of

the invasion of Henry II., the era of Giraldus, there was an ancient religion in Ireland, notoriously diverse from that of more modern introduction.

In the Annals of Ulster, ad ann. 386, it is thus recorded:—
 “*Kelidei Hiberniensis Scotiæ modernæ jus suum episcopis eligendi retinuerunt, usque ad Sæculum xiii.*” This passage assimilates the religion of the Culdees to the ancient one of this country, in this point of the election of bishops.

In the Annals of the Four Masters, ad ann. 806, a Culdee is again mentioned—“*Hoc anno venit Colideus de partibus transmarinis.*” The note of Dr. O’Conor to this passage by no means assists us, and, I presume to suggest, that he is much mistaken—“*Ordo erat religiosa,*” he says, *antiquitus ni fallor druidica*; quæ, abjecto Ethnicismo, et Christi fide amplexâ, nonnulla tamen veterum instituta servasse videtur.” He traces them elsewhere, through St. Patrick and St. Martin of Tours, to the eastern connexion—sed vide Prol. i. 78.

Something far more tangible respecting the body thus denominated is presented to us by Ussher, in his *Primordia*, (p. 637) and upon the high authority of his own knowledge; his words are—“*In majoribus certè Ultoniensium ecclesiis, (ut in metropolitica Armachanâ et in Ecclesiâ de Cluan-ynish Clochorensis diæceseos), ad nostram usque memoriam, presbyteros qui choro inservientes divina celebrabant officia Colideos, eorum presidem Priorem Colideorum appellatum, esse novimus.*” He proceeds to quote from a Bull of Pope Nicholas V., wherein mention is made of this Prior—“*Prioratus Collegii secularium presbyterorum, Colideorum vulgariter nuncupatorum Armachanensium, simplex officium siné cura existat—in loco Præcentoris*”—he was therefore, secular, without cure of souls, and performed the duties of Precentor. These last authorities define with tolerable clearness the character of more modern Culdees—those of Cambrensis are more difficult to understand. There seems to be no sufficient foundation for the conjecture of Dr. O’Conor

and the writers who apply the name to primitive institutions, confound them, without any warrant for doing so, with the early monastic establishments in Iona, Lindisfarne, and elsewhere. The estate of the Culdees of Armagh was, as Dean Murray asserts (*Ireland and her Church*, p. 70), transferred, A.D. 1625, to the College of Dublin.

Misled by some writers, I once put forth opinions respecting this controverted order, which I have since been convinced are erroneous.

Mr. Todd, in his "*History of the Ancient Church in Ireland*," affords us some information, from a MS. respecting these Culdees; and it seems to me to add to the proof, that they were a body in the church connected with psalmody, and not perhaps a separate order. They were possessed of lands in the see to which they belonged; and were probably necessary, for the due exercising of the old *Cursus Scotorum*.

III.

THE WRITINGS OF ST. PATRICK.—PAGE 108.

THE following is an enumeration of the works attributed to St. Patrick, first put forth as his "*Opuscula*" by Sir James Ware; re-edited by Signor Villanueva, Dublin, 1835:—

His Confession, or Letter to the Irish;

A Letter to the Christian Captives of Coroticus, a sea pirate;

The Canons of several Synods;

A Tract de Tribus Habitaculis;

Another de Abusionibus Seculi;

Some Sayings, Proverbs, &c.; and

Carta de Antiquitate Avallonicâ.

To these we must add, though not edited by Ware, St.

Patrick's celebrated hymn. There is also a sermon, published as his, at the end of the Florilegium, and other works have been invented for him.

It is proper that I should mention the reasons why I have admitted the first of these, and the hymn, as being so authentic, that arguments respecting St. Patrick may be justly founded on them; and why I have not allowed so high an authority to the epistle to Coroticus, and to some among the canons that are generally admitted to be genuine. As for those that are either decidedly spurious, or of doubtful authority, and are far from being "admitted by both parties as authentic," I have no where relied on them.

The Confession of St. Patrick, or his Epistle to the Irish, stands pre-eminently distinguished among these as a genuine work, on a high ground of proof, afforded by evidences external and internal. First, Sir James Ware makes mention of four MSS. used by him in editing it; among which is the celebrated Book of Armagh. The Signor Villanueva, in his edition of the *Opuscula*, has followed particularly, and in preference, a version of it which, as he says, "*ex vetustissimo Nobiliacensis S. Vedasti Monasterii codice exscriptum, evulgarent præclaræ memoriæ viri Bollandus, Henschenius, et Papebrochius.*" We have, therefore, the authority of five most ancient MSS. for its authenticity; of these, the Book of Armagh is considered to be of itself sufficient to place it beyond doubt. The Cottonian MS. adds a testimony of above 800 years old; and the ancient MS., from which, as the most correct and genuine, Signor Villanueva has chosen to edit his text, is presented to us accredited, or we may say indorsed, by the influential names of the Bollandists.

This brings us, in the second place, to the consenting opinion of persons the most competent, from general learning and acute inquiry into the particular case, to form a right judgment on the subject of the authenticity of this letter. All these are unanimous in receiving it as truly

written by Patrick in the fifth century of our era. Not to dwell on his many biographers who have made it the foundation of much of their story, as Probus, in the tenth century, and others—(Villan. p. 11, and Waræus Lectori)—there are Ussher, Ware, Colgan, Tillemont, Dupin, Leland, D'Acherius, the Bollandists, &c.; followed by other writers more modern still, such as O'Connor, Lanigan, Moore, Villanueva, Petrie, Betham, &c.; who have been convinced by the evidence thus exhibited to them. It is of great importance to observe, that these witnesses are of opposite varieties of national and religious bias—being Protestants and Roman Catholics, foreigners and Hibernians, and, among the latter, mere English and Milesian.

The internal evidence of authenticity afforded by this letter itself, will supply a third species of testimony in its favour; arising from its quotations of Holy Scripture, and from its subject matter.

Signor Villanueva asserts thus—“*Hujus opusculi, tum et Epistolæ ad Coroticum, antiquitatem, satis arguunt Sacre Scripturæ textus, laudati e versione juxta LXX. Seniorum interpretum; et non e tûm recenti S. Hieronymi translatione, quæ S. Patricii ævo publicitus non fuerat recepta.*”

In a considerable number of the passages of Scripture quoted a Latin version is employed, which appears to be peculiar to Ireland, and to differ equally from the Grecian septuagint and the Latin vulgate; and in the letter to Coroticus, Ecclesiasticus is alluded to as an inspired book, although it was not in Patrick's time admitted at Rome as canonical; all these facts impugn the supposition of modern forgery.

But the antiquity and authenticity of the Confession is especially proved by the fact, that it does not contain a single expression, calculated to sanction any one of the peculiar doctrines of the modern Roman Catholic Church; although numerous occasions occur for putting them forth, had they formed a part of the writer's creed. It could not, therefore,

have been a modern forgery; and, as it has been thus preserved as well as accredited by modern Romanists, uninterpolated by their peculiar tenets, it must be both genuine, and of the highest antiquity.

I shall not find it necessary to make any observations on the celebrated hymn of St. Patrick; its history is detailed at length, in Mr. Petrie's account of the antiquities of Tara, in the Transactions of the R.I.A., vol. 18. It is preserved among the MSS. of Primate Ussher, in the Library of the University; and had always been considered, by him and others, as most ancient and authentic. It is written in a beautiful hand, which no one at all acquainted with diplomatic remains can doubt to be older than the eighth century. Internal evidences of its very great antiquity abound in it. It is pure from Romanist errors; and that it was composed at a time of semi-pagan superstition is proved, by the invocations against the incantations of women, Smiths and Druids, that it contains.

It remains to explain why I have not relied, equally with the confession, upon the epistle to Coroticus and the canons that are usually considered to be genuine; these are thirty-one passed in a Synod of St. Patrick, thirty-four of the Synod of Patrick Auxilius and Isserninus, together with twelve others—in all seventy-seven canons. A critical inquiry into the authenticity of all these opuscula would be highly interesting, and is a very great desideratum in Irish literature; but it would be misplaced here. It is proper, however, to observe, that the letter to Coroticus, although it possesses many evidences, and contains many internal marks of the antiquity assigned to it, stands not, as I have before remarked, upon the same high ground, with respect to authority, as the confession. In the first place, it is not in the Book of Armagh, where it might naturally be expected to be found as the second epistle of St. Patrick; although it is in the MS. referred to by Villanueva and others. And again, there is a passage at its very commencement, which is very differently

arranged, pointed, and understood by Doctor Lanigan and Signor Villanueva, and from whence are deducible some questions respecting the use of the chrism, and baptism, and confirmation, which, however considered, cast a dubious hue over the epistle. It would be tedious to discuss them here; but I have thought it safest, chiefly for these reasons, not to put forward its authority, so decidedly as that of the "Letter to the Irish."

With respect to the canons, these are in collections attributed to each synod, and are always presented in one series as issuing from such synod. Every such series contains some that are decidedly apocryphal, and some that are doubtful. Each body of canons, therefore, cannot in a body be admitted as genuine; and, if interpolation be supposed, we have no means of deciding which particular canon may or may not have been the subject of it. We are, therefore, prevented from relying with implicit confidence on any. This is not a place for entering upon this very critical subject; it will be sufficient to notice a few of the most marked particulars, which have decided me in ranking these canons in a secondary grade of authenticity, as compared with the confession.

The 9th canon of the Synod of Patrick Auxilius and Isserminus forbids the intercourse of monks and nuns—"nec assiduè invicem confabulationem exerceant." Now, the ancient catalogue of saints informs us, that Patrick did not reject the company or government of women—"quia, super petram fundati, ventum tentationis non timebant." Here is direct contradiction as to the first order, which lasted for many years after the time of the synod. Villanueva alludes to the legends of St. Senanus, and other matters, to impugn the authority of the catalogue; but the existence of the contradiction is of itself sufficient to make the canon to be at least doubtful.

Again, Dr. Lanigan is angry with the second canon of the same series, because it evidences the incelibacy of Irish

priests; and rejects it, but on better grounds, because that it enacts a penalty against such of the clergy as are not shorn after the Romish fashion—"si non more Romano capilli ejus tonsi sint." The Roman tonsure, he rightly says—for it is admitted by all writers, and rests upon the unquestionable authority of Bede—was unknown in Ireland until the seventh century. This canon could not, therefore, have been enacted by a Synod of St. Patrick. This is agreeable to the testimony of the Catalogue of Saints, which is, that there was but one mode of tonsure among them until the year 598. Signor Villanueva labours to reconcile these contradictions, but in vain; at all events they leave a taint upon the canon, which must prevent its being implicitly relied on. I shall merely add, that Sir James Ware, (*Opus. S. Patr.* p. 124), draws this conclusion from it—that upon its authority we must reject the assertions of the catalogue, that St. Patrick and the saints of the two first orders were shorn from ear to ear, or not according to the Roman fashion;—but, with more justice, and more consistently with history and tradition, he might have reasoned, that the canon ought to be rejected, as being at variance with the testimony of the catalogue.

In another set of these canons there occurs, as the sixth of the series, that which is supposed to establish the practice of appeals to Rome. I have enlarged on it before in p. 124; and the following words of Dr. Lanigan there quoted—"I suspect that this canon is not quite as ancient as Patrick's times"—will be sufficient to justify me also, when I treat it as of dubious authority in respect to age, and as being most probably apocryphal.

I could add many more instances, but these will suffice for my present purpose. Dr. Lanigan, in commenting on St. Patrick's Synod, declares some of the canons "seem to have been enacted at a later period, or perhaps in some other country;" while alluding to the Synod of Patrick, Auxilius, and Isserninus he says—"That, with one or two exceptions, we

meet with nothing to make us doubt that it was really held in Ireland, and by those bishops." But these exceptions must be the consequence of *interpolation*, the existence of which of necessity induces doubt. It indeed reduces authenticity to conjecture; tempts every writer to rely on and to quote just so much as agrees with his particular system, and to repudiate the rest; while it compels the fair reasoner to forego the use of that which may be genuine and important to his argument, rather than subject it to the serious objections of being uncandid and inconclusive.

IV.

ANCIENT MSS. AND LATIN VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN IRELAND.

THERE are in this country several MSS. of undoubted antiquity, and which are possessed of very great interest; they are copies of the gospels, and even of the entire New Testament, in a version of the Latin tongue, differing materially from any of the Vulgate or Italic translations with which we are acquainted. Peculiar circumstances have introduced me to the knowledge of these volumes, and of their contents. I shall here notice some particulars relating to both; especially as much ignorance exists respecting them, and much error has gone abroad, even through the most popular channels of information.

And first of the MSS.—I shall confine my observations to the six following remarkable books:—the Book of Armagh, which is, by the kind permission of the owner, now in my custody; the Books of Kells and of Durrow—two volumes that belonged to St. Columba's celebrated abbeys at these places; and which I examined in detail, when employed in forming a catalogue of the MS. books in the library of our Dublin University, of which they form a part; the fourth is the Book

of Dimma, or St. Cronan, now in that collection, but formerly my property; the fifth is a very ancient MS. in the same repository, but very imperfect; and the sixth a curious remnant, now in the possession of the Royal Irish Academy.

The Book of Armagh contains the entire of the New Testament in Latin; Tirechan's Life of St. Patrick; this saint's confession; the Life of St. Martin of Tours, by Sulpicius Severus; the Book of the Angel; and other matters upon which I need not particularly dwell, as they are all minutely and fully detailed by Sir William Betham, in his antiquarian researches.

It would appear that this ancient volume was partly copied from the autograph of Patrick himself; it is, indeed, so asserted of his confession, at the end of which a note to that effect occurs, in the handwriting of the original scribe. We have seen that the MS. bears witness to many facts. It proves an acquaintance with Rome, with Jerome and his vulgate, about the year 700, when it is supposed to have been written; and that this father was much venerated by the Irish saints, yet not implicitly followed in his version. It shows that the earliest biographers of our saint compiled their accounts from confused and contradictory traditions; and it testifies, by the frequent use of Greek letters, to a pre-existing connexion between the Irish and Oriental Churches. It establishes the intermediate link to have been Gallican; and places upon firm grounds the conjecture, that the youthful Patrick received all his earliest teachings from the celebrated St. Martin of Tours. But this book was written after that the age of legend had set in; and at a time when, as the writer informs us, "the common tradition of the country failed to support the story," (see p. 9); and when, as Dr. Arnold expresses himself in writing of Cicero's villa, "what seems to be tradition originated in what antiquarians have told the people"—for the papal antiquarians had already begun their work of fiction respecting Patrick.

The next is the Book of Kells; this relic affords a remarkable instance of the loose manner in which information on Irish subjects has been hitherto conveyed to the public. It was, to my certain knowledge, inspected by the late Rev. C. O'Connor, with whom I was acquainted; its identity is proved beyond dispute, by an ancient charter to the abbey of Kells, inscribed at the end of it; yet, most strange to say, that profound, intelligent, and candid antiquarian has presented to the public, in his Prologomena, a fac simile—the first page of the Book of Durrow, another MS. of Columba, but of much smaller dimensions—as a specimen of the Book of Kells!

Again, Mr. Moore alludes to it, in the following note to p. 252 of his first volume. “This Kells MS. is supposed to have been the same now preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, on the margin of which are the following words, written by O’Flaherty, in the year 1677—“*Liber autem hic scriptus est manu ipsius B. Columbæ.*” Had the historian of Ireland inspected the books, or taken the trouble to inquire from the best authorities concerning them, he could not but have known, that the Book of Kells, which is displayed in Press A, is not that on which these words are inscribed; but they are written in the book which we call the Book of Durrow, and which has existed above a century, on the fourth shelf of the same press.

But, once more, the author of the critique on Mr. Petrie’s Essay on the Round Towers of Ireland (Quart. Rev. No. 152, p. 379), where he details the information which had been communicated to him on the subject of these books, hazards the following conjecture: “It may even be a question whether this”—to wit, the Book of Kells—“was not the identical manuscript described in such glowing terms, by Giraldus, in the twelfth century, as then in the possession of the Church of Kildare, and known as the Book of the Angel.” We have already seen that the Book of the Angel is contained in the Book of Armagh.

The Books of Kells and Durrow are MSS. copies of the same Latin version of the gospels with that which occurs in the Book of Armagh. They are most beautifully written in large Irish or Saxon characters; and, most probably, by St. Columba himself. Such is the testimony of uniform tradition, and also of ancient inscriptions in the volumes. (See pages 19 and 89.)

The Latin version of these MSS. is very remarkable, and seems to be peculiar to Ireland. It assimilates sufficiently with the translation of Jerome, to warrant the conclusion, that this latter was even studied by its author; yet it differs from it in readings so important, as to demonstrate that, in composing it, he exercised the independence at that time fully enjoyed in the Irish Church. Jerome's version was well known in Ireland; its preparatory letter to Pope Damasus even forms the exordium to the gospels, in the Book of Armagh. He was also holden in especial veneration by our Irish saints; witness that sentence in Columbanus' letter to Pope Gregory, wherein he tells us thus—"Illi per omnia fidem in Scripturis divinis accommodant fidem." This high opinion of Jerome is further confirmed by a note at the close of the Epistle to the Laodiceans, in the Book of Armagh, stating that it is not considered by him to be genuine. Yet was his version disregarded in material passages—I shall instance two. The first is one already mentioned (p. 89), where a verse is introduced after Matthew xxvii. 48, in which our Saviour is said to have exclaimed, after having been pierced by a lance in his side—an interpretation most properly condemned by the Council of Vienne, A. D. 1311. The second instance is the omission of that celebrated verse in John v. 7, of the three heavenly witnesses; the reception of which by any persons, as authentic, is mainly owing to its existence in Jerome's version; yet is it not found in any of the Hibernico-Latin MSS. This and the next preceding verse run thus in the Book of Armagh:—"Hic est qui venit per

aquam et sanguinem, Jhs Xps; non in aquâ solum, sed in aquâ et sanguine; et spiritus testificatur, qm Xps est veritas. Qm. iii. sunt qui testimonium dant, sps et aqua et sanguis; et iii. unum sunt." The words are much abbreviated; I have exhibited them at length, except in a few instances, among which are Sps (Spiritus), and Xps (Christus), which words, although similar, it is impossible to confound together. The learned reader need not be informed, that the Xps is formed of the Greek chi, ro, and sigma, as is general in all the ancient inscriptions of Christus in the Latin tongue.

Had I the full leisure, co-operation, and pecuniary means, that to such a work would be indispensable, I would present the public with a collation of this curious version, existing in these five most valuable MSS. as the most interesting matter that could be found among ancient remains.

The sixth MS. mentioned is illegible, excepting a few verses at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel. The leaves adhere together, and it has the colour and appearance of a sod of turf. The handwriting is of the remotest antiquity, and said to be coeval with St. Patrick. It is the book contained in the Domnach Airgid, or celebrated silver box, described by Mr. Petrie in the 18th vol. of the Transactions of the R.I.A. When disagglutinated and examined, it will be time to say more of this remarkable relic.

THE END.

100

ML
34

MAY 13 1932

